



No. CCXXVIII.]

## Contents

[OCTOBER 1901

PAGE

**The Gold-Stealers: a Story of Waddy** . . . 481

By EDWARD DYSON. Chapters XIII.—XVI.

**Some Experiences of a Commandant Prisoners  
of War, at Deadwood Camp, St. Helena,  
1900-1901** . . . 513

By Lieut.-Colonel A. L. PAGET

**Dolly and Dick** . . . 528

By H. C. BAILEY

**Gilbert White** . . . 543

By the Rev. JOHN VAUGHAN, M.A.

**Some Eighteenth-Century Children's Books** . 548

By Mrs. L. ALLEN HARKER

**A Monk's Lament for Maeve** . . . 558

By EVA GORE-BOOTH

**Airs and Graces** . . . 559

By MABEL MURRAY HICKSON

**At the Sign of the Ship** . . . 568

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- III. ORDERED NORTH.
- IV. THE FRONT.

- V. AT BAY FOR FOUR DAYS; THE THIRTEENTH BATTALION OF IMPERIAL YEOMANRY AT LINDLEY.
- VI. PRISONERS OF DE WET.
- VII. RELIEF.

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OCTOBER 1901.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE GOLD-STEALERS: A STORY OF WADDY. By EDWARD DYSON . . . . .	481
Chapters XIII.—XVI.	
SOME EXPERIENCES OF A COMMANDANT PRISONERS OF WAR, AT DEADWOOD CAMP, ST. HELENA, 1900-1901. By Lieut.-Colonel A. L. PAGET . . . . .	513
DOLLY AND DICK. By H. C. BAILEY . . . . .	528
GILBERT WHITE. By the Rev. JOHN VAUGHAN, M.A. . . . .	543
SOME EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CHILDREN'S BOOKS. By Mrs. L. ALLEN HARKER . . . . .	548
A MONK'S LAMENT FOR MAEVE. By EVA GORE-BOOTH . . . . .	558
AIRS AND GRACES. By MABEL MURRAY HICKSON, Author of 'Concerning Teddy' . . . . .	559
AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP. By ANDREW LANG . . . . .	568



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# LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

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OCTOBER 1901.

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## *The Gold-stealers.<sup>1</sup>*

A STORY OF WADDY.

BY EDWARD DYSON,

AUTHOR OF 'RHYMES FROM THE MINES,' AND 'BELOW AND ON TOP'

### CHAPTER XIII.

MEANWHILE matters of interest were progressing below at the Mount of Gold mine. The juvenile shareholders of the Company had done a fair amount of work in the soft reef of the new drive at odd times during the last fortnight; and the drive, which diminished in circumference as it progressed, and threatened presently to terminate in a sharp point, had been driven in quite fifteen feet. But to-night the young prospectors were not interested in mining operations. On top Dick Haddon's big billy-goat was feeding greedily on the lush herbage of the Gaol Quarry; below, Dick and his boon companions were preparing for a tremendous adventure.

After escaping from his room Dick had hunted up Jacker Mack, Phil Doon, and Billy Peterson. He came upon the two former at a propitious time, when both were slowly recovering from the physical effects of an 'awful doing' administered by their respective fathers at the instigation of the School Committee; when they were still filled with bitterness towards all mankind, and satisfied that life was hollow and vain, and there was no happiness or peace for a well-meaning small boy on this side of the

<sup>1</sup> Copyright 1901 by E. Dyson.

grave. Peterson had succeeded in avoiding the head of his house so far, but was filled with anxiety. Dick easily persuaded all three to accompany him to the mine, there to discuss the situation and plot a fitting revenge.

Richard Haddon's proposal was that they should all turn bushrangers on the spot, and form a band to ravage and lay waste the country, and visit upon society the just consequences of its rashness and folly in tyrannising its boys, misunderstanding them, and misconstruing their highest and noblest intentions.

'When anyone shakes our goats, ain't we a right to demand 'em back at the point o' the sword?' asked Dick indignantly.

The boys were unanimous. They had such a right—nay, it was a bounden duty.

'Very well, then, what'd they want'er lick us fer?' continued Dick. 'Won't they be sorry when they hear about us turnin' bushrangers, that's all!'

'D'ye really think they will, though?' asked Jacker McKnight dubiously. He had found his parents very unromantic people, who took a severely commonplace view of things, and retained unquestioning faith in the strap as a means of elevating the youthful idea and an unfailing goad in urging the reluctant boy along the straight and narrow way.

'Why, o' course!' cried Dick. 'When our mothers read in the papers 'bout the lives we're leadin', it'll make 'em cry all night 'cause o' the way we been treated; an' you coves' fathers'll hear tell o' yer great adventures, an' they'll know what sort o' chaps they knocked about an' abused, an' they'll respect you an' wish you was back home so's they could make up for the fatal past.'

Jacker looked doubtful still; he could not imagine his parents in that character; but Peterson was delighted with the prospect, and Phil Doon, whose mother was a large, stout woman, who spent half her day in bed reading sentimental stories, was quite impressed, and enlisted on the spot.

'You'll be my lieutenant, you know, Jacker,' said Dick; 'an' we'll call you Fork Lightnin'.'

'Hoo! Will you, though?' cried Jacker.

Dick nodded and made an affirmative noise between his closed lips.

'Fork Lightnin',' said Jacker, trying the name. 'Sounds well, don't it? What sorter feller will I be? Brave, eh?'

'Frightened o' neither man nor devil, but awful cruel, 'cause you was crossed in love.'

Jacker was delighted. He was naturally a combative youth, with a fine contempt for rules that would deny him the advantages to be derived from his ability as a swift and vigorous kicker, and a bloodthirsty and rebellious character was quite to his taste.

'Not crossed in love, though,' he complained. 'That seems measley, don't it? S'pose I shot a man once, an' the p'lice won't let me have no peace.'

'Good enough!' said Dick.

'Then I'm in. When do we start?'

'To-morrer night. We want one more. Twitter will come. That'll be five. Five is a fine gang; 'sides, we don't want fellers what ain't got billies. Bushrangers ain't no account on foot. My men must be all mounted. So I propose we all meet on the toll-bar road just when it's gettin' dark, an' all riding our billy-goats an' armed to the teeth; an' we'll stick up all the Cow Flat people goin' home from Yarraman.'

'My word!' cried Phil ecstatically. 'We owe it to that lot.'

'Couldn't we start now?' said Peterson, who had been sitting with wide eyes and open mouth, and was consumed with impatience.

'Oh, no,' said Dick; 'we gotter prepare our arms an' ammunition an' things. An' Saturdee night's best, 'cause the Cow Flats what have been to Yarraman buyin' things come up to the Drovers' Arms on the coach, an' walk home from there.'

It was agreed that Peterson should stay with Dick in the mine that night. The boys had no longer any fear of the black hole discovered by Dick at the end of the main drive. An exploring party led by the latter had made its way through the opening and into the workings beyond, and the members had found themselves in a drive communicating with the Red Hand shaft. Dick, who once in an emergency had served as tool-boy in the Silver Stream for a fortnight, knew that at a lower level there was another and a much longer Red Hand drive by which access to the Silver Stream No. 1 workings was possible, but he kept this knowledge to himself.

Shortly after midnight Dick and Billy ventured to return to Waddy, with the idea of securing Billy's goat, Hector, a sturdy black brute much admired as the most inveterate 'rusher' in the country. With the boys of Waddy a goat that butted or 'rushed' was highly prized as an animal of spirit. Peterson caught his goat, and then Dick, with unnecessary wariness and a great waste of stratagem, 'stuck up' his own home, and secured a parcel of

food carefully left for him on the table near the unlatched window by a thoughtful mother.

On Saturday the other boys turned up at the appointed time. There were rules commanding the utmost caution in entering the mine by daylight. Every care had to be taken to satisfy the shareholders that no stranger was in sight, and the last boy was compelled to keep a vigilant look-out while the others were descending, and then to make his way to the opening by a round-about route, exercising a vigilance that would have puzzled an army of black-trackers.

Dick, who before leaving home had rifled his small savings bank, had provided Jacker Mack with money for supplies, and Jacker brought with him a pound of candles, some black material for masks, and half a dozen packets of Chinese crackers. The Chinese crackers represented cartridges for the pistols of Red Hand's gang. Dick had decided to be known as Red Hand. The bushrangers' pistols were made by fashioning a piece of soft wood in the shape of a stock, and securing to this a scrap of hollow bone for a barrel. Into the barrel a cracker was thrust, the wick was ignited at a piece of smouldering 'punk'—which could be carried in the pocket in a tin matchbox—and it only needed the exercise of a little imagination to satisfy one that the resulting explosion spread death and desolation in the ranks of the enemy.

All preliminaries were arranged during the afternoon, and in the evening, just before night fell, Dick and Peterson, hidden with their trusty steeds amongst the saplings about three hundred yards beyond the toll-bar, awaited the coming of their companions in crime. They had not long to wait; in a few minutes Jacker Mack, Ted, and Phil Doon came riding up the dusty track on their brave billies. They were accompanied by a pedestrian, an interloper, who lurked behind and evidently did not anticipate a friendly reception. It was Gable.

'He saw us comin' an' he would foller,' explained Jacker.

'Yah!' cried Dick in disgust; 'why didn't you boot him?'

'So I did. Fat lot o' good that done. He on'y bellered like a bullock, an' kep' on follerin'. We pretended we wasn't goin' nowhere, but he just hung round an' couldn't be fooled.'

Dick approached the old man threateningly.

'Clear out!' he said.

Gable put up a defensive elbow and backed away, knuckling his eye piteously the while.

'R you goin'?' cried Dick, and he kicked Gable just as he

would have kicked any inconvenient and mutinous youngster in the same case.

'You look out whatcher doin',' muttered the old man, skipping about to avoid the second kick. 'I'll get someone what'll show you,' he added darkly.

Dick ran at him with a big stick, but Gable only retreated a few yards. He threw stones, knocking up the dust about the old man's feet, and Gable hopped and skipped with the agility of a kid, but after each attack he returned humbly to the heels of the party like a too faithful dog.

'Better let him come, I s'pose,' said Dick at last. 'Come on, nuisance!'

Gamble jigged up, radiant, and grinning all over his face.

Red Hand selected a suitable clump of saplings at a distance of about half a mile from the toll-bar, and here his gang secreted themselves and made their preparations for the first attack. They carried their 'cartridges' loose in small bags hung from their belts, in which were thrust three or four of the bone-barrelled pistols. Having donned their black masks, Fork Lightning was stationed on a stump near at hand to give warning of the approach of a victim, while the others took up suitable positions and Dick fitted Gable with a mask so that his appearance might not discredit the gang.

'There,' said Dick, 'you're a bushranger now, remember.'

'Crickey!' cried the old man, delighted.

'An' you'll be hanged if you're caught.'

'Oh, crickey!' Gable was more delighted still, and danced up and down, clapping his hands.

Suddenly there was a warning whistle from Fork Lightning, and that black scoundrel crept stealthily in amongst his mates.

'Someone's comin',' he said.

'To horse!' cried Red Hand. 'When I give the word, gallop into the road an' cut off their retreat. Don't fire till I give orders, an', mind, spare the women an' children.'

Sounds of horses' hoofs were heard approaching; and Red Hand's gang, masked, and mounted on their bridled and saddled goats, anxiously awaited the word of command.

'Back, men, back for your lives!' cried Dick. 'It's the p'lice, fifteen thousan' strong, an' they're hot on our track; but Red Hand's gang will never be taken alive.'

The bushrangers cowered back in the shadow as a party of three young men riding tired horses ambled slowly by, singing

dolorously and brandishing bottles. Red Hand was discreet if valiant. However, another warning came not a minute later, and this time it was a solitary man in a farmer's cart; his old horse was shuffling wearily though the dust at a jog-trot, and the boys could just discern the tall gaunt figure of the driver.

'Surround him, my lads!' yelled Red Hand. 'Bail up!' he cried, riding forward on Butts and presenting what passed very well for a pistol in the dusk. 'Your money or your life!'

The driver snatched a stick out of his cart and, uttering a great yell, began to belabour his poor horse mercilessly.

'Fire!' shrieked the implacable Red Hand; and a few seconds later six crackers exploded about the unhappy farmer, who instantly fell upon his knees and, still pounding at his horse, was whirled away amongst the trees by the startled brute. For some time the bushrangers could hear him still hammering his old horse, and catch the sound of his voice encouraging the poor animal to more reckless speed, and the crashing of the saplings as the dray pounded its way through the undergrowth. The boys were delighted, this was noble sport; the lust of victory was upon them. Gable was waving his arms and ejaculating 'Oh, crickey!' and the others capered about on their goats, and felt themselves to be very large and terrible persons indeed.

'Bushrangerin's easy ez snuff,' said Peterson.

'Course it is,' said Phil. 'Wisher few p'lice'd come along and let's have a go at 'em.'

'That was splendidly done, men,' said Red Hand with superior coolness. 'Back to your places. Someone's comin'.'

The next comer was a man on a grey horse.

'Bail up!' cried Red Hand from the cover of the saplings. 'Stir a foot an' you're a dead man.'

The rider waited for no more, but threw himself forward on his horse's neck, dug in his spurs, and galloped furiously away in the direction of Cow Flat, hearing the reports of the boys' crackers only when he was far out of range. The next victim was a small boy on a pony, who, as soon as he heard the terrible command, fell plump on to the road and then jumped up and fled in terror after his bolting horse. Red Hand's gang had now spread consternation and dismay along quite two miles of the highway, and were jubilant in consequence and primed for any adventure however desperate.

Red Hand entertained his men with talk of the glory they had earned by their actions that night, and predicted a reputation

for them beside which the reputation of every other gang of bushrangers Australia had known would fade into insignificance; and the boys listened soberly, very elated and perfectly happy.

'But we musn't let the nex' one go so easy,' said the leader.

'Here is someone,' whispered Fork Lightning.

Sure enough a pedestrian could be dimly discerned approaching from the direction of the toll-gate.

'To yer horses!' commanded Red Hand.

'Why, it's a woman,' said Peterson.

'Who cares?'

'Thought bushrangers never did nothin' to the women?'

'Oh,' said Dick, 'that's on'y when they're young an' pretty.

If this one's young an' pretty I'll 'pologise, an' it'll be all right. There ain't no reason not to bail 'em up when they're big an' strong an' able to take care o' themselves.'

This seemed quite reasonable to the gang, and they saw as the lady approached that her size did not give her any claim upon their gallantry. She was very tall and stout. In point of fact this was the woman who drove through Waddy on the day after the goat raid, calling down infamy on the township.

'Bail up!' cried Red Hand.

Phil and Ted and Peterson rode up in front, barring the way. Red Hand and Fork Lightning approached from either side, and all presented pistols. The woman backed away a few paces, staring at the goat-mounted, masked apparitions that seemed to have started out of the ground under her very nose, but the bushrangers followed her up.

'Be not afraid, madam,' said Dick in his best literary style; 'I am Red Hand, an' if you obey no injury'll be done you.'

The woman threw up her hands in amazement.

'Well I never,' she muttered. Then without the least warning she darted at Ted, seized him and pulled him from the back of his billy, and in spite of his wild struggles promptly bent him over her knee; and then, with a hand like that of a navvy, backed by a great muscular arm, began to spank the terrible outlaw.

'You look out! You le' me alone!' gasped Ted, struggling and writhing with all his power; but the flailing went on, bat—bat—bat—with blows that might have disturbed an elephant. Ted's feelings became too strong for words; he started to howl, and the night re-echoed with the cries of the outraged bushranger. The rest of the gang stood mute, staring at this shocking scene, amazed and deeply offended. It was all so



incongruous, so utterly opposed to rule and precedent; they could scarcely believe their senses. Dick was the first to recover.

'Fire!' commanded Red Hand.

Cracker-wicks were ignited and five explosions followed, but when the smoke was gone the gang still beheld the terrible woman beating away at their unhappy comrade, and too absorbed in a congenial occupation to care a solitary button for the fire of the outlaws. This was too much for Jacker. The brothers were always ready to fight each other's battles, let the odds be what they might, and the elder rushed to the rescue. The onslaught did not seem to make the least difference to this terrific female, however; she simply dropped Ted and grasped his brother. Jacker Mack was a strong boy and a fierce one, but his strength and his tricks availed him nothing against those powerful arms; in ten seconds he was in Ted's place, and the massive hand was dealing with him, falling heavily and with startling rapidity.

'Charge!' shrieked Red Hand.

But the gang was demoralised. Peterson and Doon moved back from the dangerous woman, and only one member obeyed that order—Peterson's formidable goat, Hector. Goodness knows what inspired the animal: possibly a grateful instinct, probably the sight of means to do an ill deed. Anyhow he charged. He rushed the woman from a commanding position, rushed with force and judgment, and a second later Jacker, the woman, and the goat were rolling and struggling in the dust. Red Hand and the faithful Ted dragged Jacker from the hands of the enemy, and the gang fled to a safe distance. They watched the shadowy form of the woman as she gathered herself up and shook the dust out of her dress, and then for two minutes she stood and addressed them through the darkness in strident tones and language that would have shocked an old drover or a railway ganger.

'Bushrangerin' ain't up to much,' whimpered Ted, rubbing himself with both hands.

'It's rot!' said Jacker fiercely.

Peterson and Doon muttered words of approval, and Dick felt that four pairs of reproachful eyes were turned upon him. Gable was still hopping about ecstatically murmuring 'Crickey! Oh, crickey!' as he had been doing all through the encounter with the woman.

'How'd I know?' said Dick in self-defence. 'You fellers oughter had better sense'n to let her get hold o' you.'

'You started it!' groaned Ted.

'Pretty lot o' bushrangers you are, anyway,' Dick sneered, 'howlin' 'cause a woman gave you a bit of a doin'.'

'How'd *you* like it?' asked Jacker sullenly.

Dick disdained to reply, indeed his attention was occupied with more important things. Out of the night came the sound of galloping hoofs and calling voices. The boys listened anxiously for a minute or so, and then realised their danger.

'They're after us!' exclaimed Dick. 'Scatter an' run for the scrub. Meet at the mine!'

The pursuers dashed up on their horses just as the boys swarmed over the fence into Wilson's paddock. It was the party of young men who first passed the bushrangers, and the man on the grey horse. They were armed with bottles and were three parts drunk, and bent on making an heroic capture. Some of them sprang from their horses and pursued the flying bushrangers through the trees.

Dick and Peterson reached the Gaol Quarry safely, and sat in doleful silence waiting for their mates, and wondering if any had been taken. Ted and Jacker joined them a few minutes later, and Phil Doon came limping up in the course of a quarter of an hour. He had bad news.

'They've got Gable!' he cried from a distance.

'No. Go on!'

'Shelp me. I fell gettin' over the fence an' sneaked into a hollow tree, an' saw 'em snavel him. "Here's one of 'em," said one, an' they put him on a horse an' tied his legs under its belly, an' they've gone into Yarraman with him.'

'Gee-rusaleem! An' what'd he say?' gasped Dick.

'Nothin' 'sept "Oh, crickey!"'

'Well, he won't split on us. He won't know a word about it in the mornin'. We're all right if none of us blabs. You fellers goin' to stay?'

'I ain't. I'm sick o' bein' a bushranger,' said Jacker, with a reflective and remorseful rub at his hurt place.

'So'm I,' said Ted.

Phil Doon, it appeared, had pressing reasons for returning home, but Peterson remembered that he had still an account to settle with his father, and resolved to share Dick's fortune.

'Right you are,' said Dick. 'You fellers bring some crib to-morrer, an' if you see Parrot Cann tell him to fetch some too—an', mind, no blabbin'.'

Reverses of this kind did not depress Dick ; he had experienced many failures, but the wreck of one enterprise only implied the necessity of starting another.

'Say,' he said mysteriously, 'there's a big reason why we should keep things darker'n ever. Listen. We've struck the reef!'

The others stared incredulously.

'You're havin' us,' said Jacker.

'Am I? Tell 'em, Billy.'

'No, he ain't,' said Peterson. 'It's true, strike me breath. We got a specimen this mornin' wif three colours in it.'

'So if anyone's told where we're hidin' they'll see the stone an' go an' jump the mine,' said Dick artfully.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

NEITHER of the McKnights nor Parrot came to the boys on the Sunday morning, and Dick and Billy, whose larder had run short, were compelled to make a raid on Wilson's garden, which yielded little in the way of fruit, but carrots and turnips were not despised. At about eleven o'clock, from an outlook point amongst some scrub on the Red Hand tip, Dick and his mate could see that something unusual was going on in Waddy. They saw a crowd gathering near the Drovers' Arms, and could catch the glitter of the accoutrements of a couple of troopers. A little later a mounted policeman actually came cantering into the paddock and forced them to creep stealthily to their safe retreat at the bottom of the mine. Here they sat and talked, a prey to the most torturing curiosity. Dick's theories to explain the apparent sensation were fine and large, investing himself and his companion with profound dignity as the heroes of a thrilling adventure ; but Billy's for a wonder were somewhat gloomy, reckoning with parental castigations and ten years in gaol. This unusual frame of mind was induced, no doubt, by a limited, strictly vegetarian diet. Dick took into account the possibility of Jacker, Ted, or Phil Doon divulging the Company's great secret, although his faith in the loyalty of his mates was strong. If the worst came to the worst he meditated a retreat through the hole into the

Red Hand drive, and flight thence down the ladder-shaft and into the spacious workings of the Silver Stream.

To help pass the time the two worked a little in the drive, breaking down about a hundredweight of the quartz ridge that had cut in across the narrow face. The stone showed gold freely, and at another time this would have occasioned the wildest jubilation, but now everything was secondary to the wonder inspired by what they had seen in Waddy, combined with their dread of the results of last night's work. It was well on in the afternoon when they were joyfully startled by the sound of a whistle in the shaft.

'Hello, below there!' cried a voice, and a few seconds later Parrot Cann, too excited to go through the usual formalities, rattled down and landed in a heap at Dick's feet.

'What's up?' asked Dick eagerly, as Parrot crept into the drive.

'Oh, I say,' gasped Parrot, 'youse fellers are in fer it!'

'How? Who split? What're the troopers doin'?'

'They're after youse.'

'After us!' Peterson's face paled at this corroboration of his worst suspicions.

'My oath! Gable's in gaol at Yarraman; Phil an' Jacker an' Ted's been took, an' now they're after you.'

'Fer what?'

'Rob'ry under arms, the feller said, an' shooting with intent'r somethin'.'

Dick whistled incredulously. Here was fame, here was glory. His favourite authors were justified, and yet there was the dark side; thought of his mother came with a sharp twinge.

'Who went an' split—Ted?'

'None o' the Company,' said Parrot. 'The troopers came to arrest Gable's mates, thinkin' they was men, an' Toll-bar Sam told you was. He saw you all last night.'

'Did they take Ted, an' Jacker, an' Phil right away?'

'Um. Off to Yarraman. You don't know what a row's on. It's awful. Them fellers what captured Gable told a yarn about a gang o' bushrangers'n a terrible fight, an' swore Gable was the bloodthirstiest of 'em all. The Yarraman *Mercury* printed a special paper this mornin', with all about the outbreak of a new gang o' bushrangers in great big type, an' everyone's near mad about it, 'sept those what's laughin'.'

The boys gazed at each other for a few moments in silence. It took some time for Dick and Billy to grasp the astounding

facts. They were real bushrangers, their escapades had been printed in the papers, they were actually being pursued by *bona fide* troopers on flesh-and-blood horses—what more could ambitious youth demand? Dick's unconquerable romanticism upheld him; he had achieved distinction, and the prospect of deluding and outwitting the police after the manner of his most brilliant heroes filled him with delight, but Billy Peterson was awed and out of spirits.

'It's all right, Billy,' said Dick, 'they'll never find us here. We can defy 'em all fer weeks.'

'Yes,' said Billy bitterly, 'but I'm hungry!'

'You didn't bring no crib, Parrot.' Dick had made it a rule that the necessities of a shareholder temporarily in difficulties and hiding in the mine were to be attended to by the free members of the Company or the others who, like Parrot Cann, were admitted to the Company's councils.

'Wasn't game,' answered Parrot; 'they'd 'a' watched me. Had to sneak away as it was.'

Dick puckered his face wisely. It was a very dirty face just now, and his red hair, long neglected, hung in wisps over his forehead and about his ears, giving him an elfish look in the candlelight.

'Never mind,' he said, 'bring us some to-night, first chance you get; but be cunnin'. We'll shake some fruit soon ez it's dark, to keep us goin'.'

'What's the good o' fruit?' groaned Peterson. 'Fruit ain't grub.'

Dick looked anxiously at his mate. There was an immediate danger of the outlaws being starved out.

'Parrot's goin' to fetch some,' he said brightly.

Parrot promised to do his best for them, but, although they waited till nearly nine o'clock in hungry anticipation, he did not return that night. The last carrot was eaten, and a cautious excursion to Summers's orchard produced nothing, Maori's warning bark driving the boys back to the Gaol Quarry, empty and disconsolate. Billy could hold out no longer, but he did not meditate an open desertion.

'I'll jes' sneak round our house till I get a chance to slip in an' shake a junk o' bread or somethin'; then I'll come right back an' we'll go halves,' he said.

'Sure you'll come back, are you?'

'S that wet? 'S that dry?'

Dick accepted the oath. He would have gone home himself with burglarious intentions, but feared that the official anxiety to catch the notorious head of the new gang must have concentrated police vigilance about his mother's house, and the risk was too great.

'Hurry back ez quick's you can,' he commanded. 'N you'll have to be slyer 'n a black snake 'r they'll nab you.'

Dick spent the first hour alone under the saplings in the quarry, and then, as Billy had not returned and the time hung heavily on his hands, he crept out and up the hill towards the Red Hand. He prowled about amongst the old tips for a time, and then seated himself at the foot of a dead butt and gave himself up to thought. He began to fear that Peterson would prove unfaithful, or, worse still, that he had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and the idea made him very uneasy. He hesitated about returning to the drive, for, although singularly free from the superstitious fears that would make such a place a haunt of horrors to the average youngster, the notion of sleeping alone below there did not please him, and he had still some hope of hearing Billy's signal.

He was beginning to feel the pangs of hunger, too, and now that it was too late recollected that he might have found a ministering angel in Miss Chris. It would have been an easy matter to have met her when coming through the paddock from chapel at nine o'clock, and an easier matter to have appealed to her tender sympathies with a story of hunger and misfortune. The boy's thoughts lingered with Miss Chris; he found a melancholy satisfaction in the belief that she would pity him, and probably shed a few tears over the sorrows of a noble and generous youth driven to crime by persecution, and outlawed through the machinations of an unscrupulous constabulary. So real could he make these sentimental fancies that her keen sorrow for him filled him with acute emotions of self pity, and a large tear actually rolled down his small, freckled nose.

Suddenly romance was swept out of his mind, and wonder and fear possessed him. Throwing himself forward, he crept noiselessly to a rotten trunk overgrown with suckers that lay between him and the Red Hand shaft, and, raising himself on his hands, peered through the bushes. A belt of pale golden light, thrown by the rising moon between the converging tips, lay right across the mouth of the shaft; and up through the rusty bark of the door was thrust a thin long hand and a bony arm. As Dick

gazed, trembling and amazed, a second hand appeared. He heard the rattle of a chain, the click of a lock, and then the door was thrust upwards and let noiselessly back upon the timber. Now a man's head came into view, and up out of the shaft crawled a figure that Dick recognised in spite of the precautions taken. Reaching into the darkness of the shaft, the man, who remained on his knees in a crouching position, drew up a skin bag containing something of considerable weight apparently, and then came another head, and a second man slid, snake-like, from the shaft. At the sight of this second man, Dick, whose heart seemed to have swollen within him to an enormous size, gasped aloud; and he heard a warning 'Hush!' from the shaft, and lay perfectly still. The door was closed, the lock clicked again, and when Dick ventured to look the two men were stealing away towards the quarry. The boy crept after them to the extent of the trunk behind which he was hidden, and when he looked again they had disappeared. Creeping silently in the shadows and amongst the scrub ferns, Dick followed until, resting a moment, he heard distinctly the words:

'Why did you hit him again? Good God! did you want to kill him?' The voice was that of Ephraim Shine, the searcher.

'No. That won't kill him. Don't be so blasted chicken-hearted. I didn't want to be seen, you ass!' Dick recognised the voice of Joe Rogers. He had recognised the man's face in the moonlight.

'The lick I gave him was enough, it must 'a stunned him.' Shine spoke in a low voice.

'D'yer think he recognised you?' asked Rogers hoarsely.

'No, I was in the shadder. I d'know, though—I d'know.'

'Listen here, an' take a grip on that screamin' woman's tongue o' yours. It don't matter whether he saw you 'r he didn't see you, 'cause he won't live t' tell it.'

'Oh, Heaven! Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! I didn't mean that—I swear to Heaven, I on'y meant to stun him!'

'I know yer didn't. Pull yerself together, you quiverin' idiot. D'ye think I meant to do murder?'

'No, no, no; o' course not. Pr'aps he ain't hurt ez bad ez you think.'

'Tain't the hurt, it's this. I on'y thought of it comin' up the ladders. Did yer notice where he fell? He went back down the incline, fallin' with his head a few feet up from the



pumps. Know what that means? Harry Hardy'll be *found drowned!*'

Dick heard Shine gasping for breath, and Rogers went on coolly:

'He was in the Sunday afternoon shift at the pumps. The water in the incline'll rise up over him before the first workin' shift goes down.'

'Let's go back, an' drag him out. Let's go back!'

'Sit still, damn you! Go back an' be trapped, or be recognised if his senses return! His candle was burnin'.'

'But it's murder—it's murder!'

'Is it? Listen, here. I noticed a lump o' rock had fallen out o' the roof. It'll be thought he was stunned by it, an' drowned in the water as it rose.'

'Man, it's terrible. Two brothers! My sin is findin' me out, Joe Rogers!'

'Shut up cant, d'you hear! It served him thunderin' well right. What'd he want to come pokin' into the mine at all fer? What the devil did the other one interfere in what didn't concern him fer? But we've got it in spite of 'em.' Rogers had plunged his hands into the skin bag.

'All, Rogers, all!' For the moment Shine's cupidity triumphed over his fears. 'Every blessed ounce. All the stuff I've been puddlin' away in the floor o' that drive fer weeks. An' the nugget, ain't it a beauty—ain't it a beauty? An' to think I've been shepherdin' that daisy fer ten shifts!'

Dick crept closer and, peering through a slit in the great hollow trunk of the tree, saw that Rogers was handling the contents of the bag, and on his knee lay a gleaming mass that the boy knew to be a beautiful nugget.

'What devil's luck brought that young fool to the "T" drive?'

'He must 'a heard you splashin'. You wasn't careful.'

'Ez careful ez I could be. I had to scoop the stuff outer holes in the wet floor o' the drive where I'd puddled it away in the mud.'

'Ain't there a chance fer him—not a single hope?'

'Oh, yes, but it's a bad un fer us if he recognised you. There's the chance o' him recoverin', an' draggin' himself out o' the water. Hullo! what in hell's name's happenin' now? Quick, cut for the scrub; someone's comin'. I'll hide the bag here. Come back when they've passed.'

Dick heard Rogers throw the calf-skin bag into the hollow of the tree and scrape the loose rubbish over it, and then both glided away in the shadow of the Red Hand tips. From beyond the tips came the beat of a horse's hoofs, and the sound of human voices. Dick's first thought was of his pursuers, the troopers; his second of his escape; his third sent the blood surging through his veins and his heart beating like a piston. A grand thought, a magnificent thought! He could have cried out with exultation as it swept into his mind. Creeping around the tree he silently unearthed the gold-stealers' bag and dragged it after him, retreating to the quarry. At the edge of the incline he let the bag slide, and it went to the bottom with the noise a cow might have made moving through the scrub. Dick followed, scrambling down the rocks. Having recovered the bag, he dragged it under the scrub to the opening in the wall, hastily concealing his tracks. There was some difficulty in getting the bag through the space in the rock, but he managed it well; then swung it free of the ladder, and it dropped into the shaft and on to the broken reef below. Dick now clambered through on to the ladder, drew the loose scrub ferns into their places, and fitted into the crevice the wedge-shaped stone the shareholders of the Mount of Gold kept as a last concealment of their retreat.

Standing on the ladder Dick waited, and presently heard sounds as of men making their way into the Gaol Quarry. His suspicions were correct: the party was seeking him. Presently he heard a voice he recognised as that of Jim Peetree, saying:

'This is the spot, boss; I've seen him here scores o' times. If he ain't here I give it up.'

Dick heard the jingle of spurs, and an authoritative voice.

'Search all about amongst the scrub and the rocks. Keep my horse ready in case the boy makes a bolt for it.'

There were three or four men, Peterson and McKnight amongst them. They searched industriously, coming pretty close to Dick's hiding-place more than once.

'We should have let the other lad go and have followed him,' said the authoritative voice. 'Fancy three troopers being kept a whole day and half the night dancing after a bit of a kid.'

Dick's heart thrilled at this.

'Well, he's not here, that's certain sure,' said Peterson. 'My boy said he left him in the paddock, an' I s'pose he can't be fur, but I tell you you won' get him, he's that cunnin'. He's fuller o'

wickedness an' wisdom, an' good an' bad, than any boy you ever see, sergeant.'

'Ah, well, we'll move on and try the other spot; but I would like to have the dear boy for five minutes now, while I feel in the humour to knock some of the bad out of him.'

They started off again, and when the beat of the horse's hoofs was lost in the distance Dick crept from his hiding-place and climbed up out of the quarry. He now stole to a position from which he could command a view of the hollow tree, whilst remaining under thick shelter and leaving himself an excellent opening for retreat. His blood was full of the excitement of this new adventure, a true adventure dealing with theft and murder. He was afraid, terribly afraid, but it seemed to him that all his emotions were held in abeyance: he was conscious of their existence, but they no longer ruled him. One thing was paramount, his determination to know everything of the crime that had been perpetrated in the main drive of the Silver Stream. Fragments of thoughts seemed to flicker up like flames within him and die out again instantly, and he repeated constantly under his breath without knowing why:

'Her father! Her father! Her father!'

There was something to be done—much to be done, and one important thing, one thing that meant life or death; but these must come after. Now he was wild to know all that the thieves might tell.

Rogers was the first to come crawling back to the tree. He scattered the loose rubbish in the hollow trunk, and uttered a fierce oath.

'It's gone, gone, gone!' he almost shouted as Shine joined him.

'You lie, you lie! You want to rob me!' The long searcher had flown at his throat, and for a few seconds they struggled together, but Rogers threw the older man off fiercely and dragged him by the throat to the tree.

'Feel, search, look for yourself, you hound!' he cried. 'Could I eat it?'

Shine, going on his hands and knees, clawed amongst the rubbish; then, whining and muttering, went scratching about like a dog, seeking high and low, and Rogers followed him blaspheming with insensate fury.

'It's no good, I tell you, you snuffling, whimpering, white

livered cur!' he said. 'Those men have got away with it, curse them!'

But Ephraim continued his search, creeping under the scrub, scratching in the grass, and as he searched his whimper grew louder and louder, and he cried like an old woman at a wake.

'An' we killed a man, we killed a man!' he wailed again and again.

Rogers rushed at him viciously, and kicked him heavily in the ribs.

'Get up, you dog!' he cried hoarsely, with a string of oaths. He dragged Shine to his feet, and continued: 'Listen to me. Go home an' go to bed fer a while. Turn up at the mine all right at one, and in the mornin'. Keep your mouth shut, an' wait till you hear from me again, or—or——' He did not finish his threat. After a moment he continued, in a more composed tone: 'We're in no danger if we've not been seen. That was the trooper after the cub Haddon. He's got the gold all right. Bury the key. Get back to your house, an' lie down fer a while. Be careful—p'raps we're watched now.'

The two men moved off together, and after they had passed the tips Dick quickly made his way into the quarry, and from thence to the drive of the Mount of Gold.

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## CHAPTER XV.

'HER father did it! Her father! Her father!' Dick continued to repeat these words as he procured candles and prepared himself for a journey into the deep mines. He was conscious of a double duty; he must rescue Harry Hardy from the rising waters and save the father of Christina Shine from a terrible crime, and yet he went about his task as if moved by an external impulse. The work had been mapped out for him by someone or something apart, and he undertook it without a thought of its dangers or a hint of revolt. In fact, he was feverishly anxious to face the black Red Hand shaft and the great, lone workings beyond. He lit one candle, put several pieces in his pocket with the matches, and started on his journey. He was oblivious to his surroundings, oblivious to everything but the object of his quest—Harry Hardy,

lying far below in the dripping main drive of the Silver Stream. His large dark eyes, staring unblinkingly, seemed as if set on a vision of his friend prone on the muddy floor of the drive, with the treacherous waters stealing amongst his hair. The present mission had nothing in common with those fanciful adventures of Dick's that had served to make the boy the wonder and despair of his native township. Richard Haddon was entirely forgotten for the time being, and this concentration of mind and energy served to carry the boy bravely over every obstacle.

Dick made his way through the opening he and Ted had fashioned, and dropped into the Red Hand drive beneath, and then turned with familiar feet and hastened towards the shaft. A few centres had been knocked out and thrown across the pit as a staging, so that access to the ladder was possible, but not without some risk. The boy paused at nothing, and reaching the iron rungs with a bound, started down the perpendicular ladder. Down, down he went for many minutes, his candle feebly illuminating a blurred patch about his head. Above, through a bewildering space of darkness, the grated opening at the surface shone like a faint star in another sphere; below was solid blackness; about him the slime of the dripping timbers sparkled in the candle's rays. Down, down, down! The journey might have seemed interminable—a long pilgrimage into the earth's black internal distances—had the boy had a mind for it, but he thought nothing of the task; at length his feet struck the slabs over the well, and turning he flashed his light into the cavernous depth of a big drive.

Dick plunged into the drive without a pause, and now the way was familiar again. Voyages of discovery made during crib time when he officiated as tool-boy in the Silver Stream had often brought him up the jump-up into the Red Hand drive. Down that jump-up he scrambled now, and stood in the first level of the Silver Stream where the rich gutter had dipped away. A short journey brought him to a balance shaft. Down this to the lower level he travelled without any difficulty, and his journey was almost completed. He was in the bottom drive hastening towards the face where Rogers and Shine had left their victim. He could hear the far-off throbbing of the plunger in the big Stream pumps as it drew the water into the lifts, and above it all the strange murmur of a great mine, like the voice of a distant sea.

Finding an empty truck the boy ran it before him on the rails. He was experienced miner enough to know that one can

only travel quickly in this way in a wet drive full of ruts and pitfalls. Passing the 'S' drive, where the robbers had done their work, Dick found Harry Hardy just as Rogers had described him, on his back a few feet up the incline from the hand-pump that served to drain the low-lying part of the drive. His arms were thrown out, and his deadly pale face was turned up, his chin pointing to the roof. Upon his forehead were stains of blood, and he lay like a corpse in the black water. The flood had risen above his ears, and the boy knew he had come only just in time.

Dick stuck his candle in the soft clay, ran to Harry's head, and lifted it from the water, and kneeling gazed intently into the cold white face. He thought his friend dead.

'Her father done it!' he murmured. 'Her father! Her father!'

He looked and listened for signs of life; he called Harry's name again and again, and felt for the beating of his heart, having at the same time only a vague idea of the location of that organ. He tried to lift the young man away, but his strength was not equal to the task; and so, after collecting some pieces of reef to keep Harry's face above the water, he attempted to drag him out of the reach of the flood. By putting forth all his power he contrived to draw his inanimate friend a few feet up the incline; then, by lifting the shoulders an inch or two at a time, he succeeded in turning Hardy right round with his head farthest from the rising stream. The boy was now smothered from head to foot with yellow clay and his lustrous eyes shone from a face daubed with the puddled reef; and he crouched in the slurry of the drive holding Hardy's head upon his knee, gazing intently into his face, muttering ever, in a half-puzzled way the same words:

'Her father! Her father!'

The sound of a lump of reef falling from the roof somewhere far down the drive brought Dick sharply to his feet. His work was not yet accomplished. The scheme that had come to him without volition was nevertheless clearly set forth in his mind. He started dragging at Hardy again, and gradually drew him to the ordinary level of the drive. Once the water attained this height it would flow away towards the shaft, and do the young man no harm. Dick feared that Harry Hardy was dead, but he did not reason, he only obeyed the instinct that possessed him and that also bade him avoid the incoming shift. If the men found him there he would have to tell all, and her father had



done it—*her* father! A swift panic seized Dick and he snatched up his candle and ran back the way he had come. It was hours, he imagined, since he lay listening to Rogers and Shine above the quarry, and he wondered that the night-shift men were not below long ere this. He reached the balance shaft without having seen a man, and climbed swiftly to the upper level. His race was continued along these workings to the jump-up. Once in the Red Hand drive he was safe from discovery, but the feverish activity still possessed him. How he climbed that fearful flight of ladders up the black wet shaft he never knew. He remembered nothing of the agony of the toil the day after, when all seemed like a dream.

Dick made his way into the Mount of Gold drive again. An impulse moved him to block the opening connecting the two drives with loose reef, and the same impulse led him to hide the skin bag containing the gold away under the dirt in the shaft of the Mount of Gold. The excitement that drove him to the rescue of Harry Hardy sustained him till he had climbed from the mine and crawled out into the quarry; then his strength all went out of him, and left him sick and wretched. He was famished, all his limbs ached with a dull insistent pain after he had rested for a few minutes, and his weariness was so great that it was a terrible task to drag himself out of the quarry. But he succeeded in gaining the hillside at length, and then hastened as quickly as he could through the trees in the direction of the Silver Stream, stumbling as he went, and sobbing quietly in utter collapse of strength and spirit.

When Dick reached the vicinity of the big mine he was surprised to find the brace deserted. He stole up and peered through the engine-house window at the driver's clock, and saw with dull amazement that it was not yet half-past twelve. It had taken him little over half an hour to reach Harry Hardy and return—it seemed to him that he had been toiling for many hours. He crept in between the long stacks of firewood, and made a bed on the soft bark and waited. The first night shift of the week did not start work till one o'clock on Monday morning, and the mine was silent save for the slow puffing of the pumping engine and the deliberate rumbling of the bob.

Lying on his stomach on the bark, the boy fixed his eyes upon the mine and suffered through the slow dragging minutes. He wept incessantly, and his teeth chattered although the night was warm. A new fear had taken possession of him, a fear that

Harry Hardy, if alive, would perhaps move and roll down the incline into the water again before the miners reached him. He waited in an agony of anxiety, and his eyes never moved from the cage at the surface.

The miners began to come in at length. They came from all directions, with heavy footsteps, swinging their crib billies, calling to each other in gruff voices. Lamps were lit upon the brace, and in the boiler-house and changing shed, and Dick saw the first cageful of men drop out of sight, as the engine groaned and the mine took up its busy duties again.

One cage load after another went down, and still Dick waited. At last there came a wild, unusual beat of the knocker. The boy knew the signal and started up on his knees. A man rushed past the end of the stacks to knock up Manager Holden. Others gathered excitedly about the mouth of the shaft, and the long flat ropes spinning over the pulleys travelled at top speed.

Soon Harry was brought to the surface, and placed upon a hurdle, and four men carried him away across the paddocks towards Waddy. Dick followed at a safe distance. Locky McRae, the boss of the shift, had run on ahead, probably to warn Mrs. Hardy.

The boy saw Harry carried to his mother's house, saw a man hurry by to call Mrs. Haddon, and waited for some time after she arrived, hidden in a gutter near at hand, listening for every word. After about a quarter of an hour Pete Holden drove his trap to the door, and Dick heard them talking of the hospital and Yarraman; then he knew that Harry Hardy was not dead, and he dragged his worn, aching limbs to his own home, stupefied with suffering, hunger, and fatigue.

When Mrs. Haddon entered her kitchen an hour later, carrying a flaming match in her fingers, she was shocked to see a small, yellow-clad figure crouched in her own particular armchair near the chimney, and surmounting it a small white face in which burned two astonishing eyes. The little widow screamed and dropped the light and then screamed again, but a feeble voice reassured her.

'Richard Haddon, is that you?' she said severely. 'Oh! you wicked, bad, vicious boy! Where have you been? What've you been doing?'

She was busying herself preparing the lamp, and her tongue ran on.

'You're breakin' your poor mother's heart—breakin' my heart

with your bushrangin' an' villainy, bringin' down the police, an' trouble, an' sorrow on me.'

The little woman's nerves had been sorely tried of late with her own troubles and her neighbours', and she broke down now and wept.

'An' you don't care,' she sobbed, 'you don't care a bit how I suffer!'

Now the lamp was lit, and the widow turned her streaming eyes upon her incorrigible young son, and instantly her whole expression changed. She forgot to weep, she ceased to complain; she gazed at Dick and her bosom was charged with terror, pity, and remorse. And truly Dick was a pitiful and ghostly object, sitting there in his mud, looking very small and pinched, with unaccustomed hollows in his pale cheeks, and here and there a nasty bloodstain showing brightly against the yellow clay.

'Dick!' screamed Mrs. Haddon.

The next moment Dick lay in his mother's arms, clinging to her with tenacious fingers, crying hysterically, utterly unlike the Dick she thought she knew so well; and Mrs. Haddon kissed him, and wept over him, and murmured to him as if he were really a baby again. She ascribed all to terror aroused by the knowledge that the police were after him. He had covered himself with slurry in strange hiding-places, and had had a fall probably or a blow. Dick was fed, Dick's clothes were put in water, and finally Dick fell asleep in his own bed with his mother sitting by his side, her hand clasped in his. If Dick had been told a week earlier that he would ever go to sleep clinging to his mother's hand, he would have scouted the idea with indignation and scorn; and he remembered the act later with a blush as something shamefully effeminate or infantile, betraying a weakness in his character hitherto quite unsuspected.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

DICK'S limbs were all stiff and sore when he awakened, but he was wolfishly hungry, and that fact satisfied his mother that he had suffered no particular physical injury. He was still much paler than usual and suspiciously reserved, but he ate a good breakfast, and would have given his mother even more gratifying evidence of the perfect state of his health had not Miss Chris interrupted his meal by a sudden and disconcerting

entrance. The young woman came into the room breathless, eager-eyed, and white to the lips. She drew herself up by the door, and made a poor pathetic effort to compose herself, to frame her plea in conventional words, but she was too agitated to remember customary greetings.

‘Tell me! Tell me!’ she said faintly.

Dick sat stock still, wondering what new thing had happened, asking himself how much Chris knew of his secret; but sympathetic little Mrs. Haddon started up in astonishment.

‘Tell you what, my dear?’ Then light came to her. ‘About the accident?’

‘Yes, oh yes! Is it true? They say he is dying!’

‘It isn’t true. He is not very badly hurt. His mother went to the hospital with him, an’ has come back. It’s concussion, the doctors say, an’ nothin’ serious.’

Miss Chris was plucking nervously at the bosom of her dress with her left hand, steadying herself against the table with her right, and now that she knew there was no occasion for her great alarm, woman-like she trembled on the verge of tears. Mrs. Haddon had resumed her seat, and for a moment the eyes of the two women met; then, much to the boy’s astonishment, Miss Chris covered her face with her hands and darted forward and knelt by his mother’s side, and there was a repetition of the incident in which he had figured a few hours earlier. Mrs. Haddon clasped Christina to her tender breast, and spoke little soothing speeches over the fair head, whilst Chris wept a little, and laughed a little, and clung tightly to her friend.

‘Yes, yes, I know, my dear,’ whispered Mrs. Haddon. ‘I know, I know. But don’t you fret. It’ll all come out right.’

The women seemed to thoroughly understand each other, but to Dick this was quite inexplicable. He perceived, however, that Miss Chris was troubled in some way, and all his romantic chivalrous feelings towards her were stirred, and his determination to spare her at all costs was strengthened again. Looking at the pair, and remembering the consolation he had derived from his mother’s strong embrace, the boy wondered what peculiar virtue lay in that kindly bosom that seemed to make it the natural refuge of the afflicted, and wondering he stole out and left the two together.

When the women of Waddy had anything exceptional to talk about they talked amazingly, and on this particular Monday there was so much of interest to be discussed that even the most voluble

could only do justice to the subjects by neglecting domestic duties and devoting themselves to back-gate arguments. Harry Hardy's accident was considered and debated from many points of view. Harry was twice reported dead during the morning—on the authority of Mrs. Ben Steven and Mrs. Sloan—but this was contradicted by Mrs. Justin, who declared that the young man still breathed, but was suffering from many and various injuries which she alone was able to minutely describe. Then Mrs. Hardy arrived home from Yarraman and it was known that Harry's injuries were not likely to prove mortal, so the subject lost interest and was abandoned in favour of Richard Haddon and his bloodthirsty gang. 'The boy Haddon' had been captured after a desperate encounter, and would be called upon to stand his trial, along with the poor lads he had so grievously misled, at Yarraman next day. It was conceded that 'the boy Haddon' was about to meet his deserts at last, but there was some slight difference of opinion as to the exact nature of Dick's deserts. Some of the ladies thought ten years' imprisonment with various floggings and other heavy penalties in the way of solitary confinement, leg-irons, and an unvarying diet of dry bread and water would be the severest punishment with which the youthful malefactor could reasonably be afflicted. Mrs. Ben Steven stood out resolutely for hanging, and taking into account the thrilling report of his crimes supplied by the extraordinary issue of the Yarraman *Mercury*, many of the ladies were compelled to admit that this extreme view was probably the correct one; besides, it possessed the advantage of coinciding admirably with the long-established popular opinion that Richard Haddon must necessarily come to a bad end. The women generously admitted, however, that they were sorry for his mother, poor lady.

The *Mercury* could not very well have made more of what it called 'The Outbreak of a New Gang' in its Sunday extraordinary. A whole page was filled with various accounts of the depredations of the gang, the terrifying appearance of its members, and certain moral reflections thrown in by the editor for the benefit of the government and the police. There was 'Mr. Billson's account,' 'Mr. Hogan's account,' and 'the account given by Master Mathieson.' Each of these persons had been stuck up by the gang, and had escaped most miraculously after displaying great daring in the face of a bloodthirsty fire. The *Mercury* exhausted all its resources in the way of large black capitals and display type to do justice to the biggest sensation that had come

in its way for years, and the appearance of the paper created the most profound amazement throughout the town and district. Gable was described as a cunning scoundrel whose affectations of almost imbecile simplicity might easily have deceived intelligences less keen than those at the service of the *Mercury*, and neither Messrs. Billson and Hogan nor Master Mathieson hinted that their assailants were anything less than grown men of the largest size and most ferocious type.

Alas ! in Monday morning's *Mercury* the editor was reluctantly compelled to repudiate the most enthralling portions of Sunday's story, but he still took a very serious view of the affair, and vehemently contended that recent facts did not in any way tend to relieve the Government of its responsibilities in the matter of increased police-protection for Yarraman and district. It had transpired that the perpetrators of the series of outrages on the Cow Flat road were boys, undisciplined and dangerous youths, fully armed and led by the man Gable, whose mental infirmities were of such a nature as to render him unfit to be at large in a civilised community. The *Mercury* was informed that all the young ruffians who had taken part in the sticking-up incidents were in custody, and would appear in the police court on the following morning.

Mrs. Haddon, who still believed Dick's strange reserve and his lack of spirits to be due to his fear of the law and the dread prospect of having to appear in court, endeavoured indirectly and very cleverly as she imagined, to ease his mind. She did not wish him to think he had done no wrong, or that she did not regard his conduct as most reprehensible ; but his mute misery appealed to her mother's heart, and she heaped derision on those ' fool men ' who had been deluded by the silly pretence of a pack of boys, and who would be the laughing-stock of the whole countryside when the truth was made known in court and the magistrates arose and abused them for cowards and simpletons. This was comforting to Dick, but in truth he thought little of the pending court case, and it gave him no concern even when he found himself in the troopers' hands. His secret weighed heavily upon him, and the sight of Mrs. Hardy, erect and brave and composed as ever, but with traces of suffering in her face that the boy could not fail to detect, had brought home to him an aspect of the case that he had not considered up to now. Her son Frank was a prisoner suffering for a crime committed by Ephraim Shine : in protecting Shine for Christina's sake he must sacrifice Mrs. Hardy, Frank, and Harry.



The problem tried Dick sorely, but he had plenty of time to think it over and he determined to wait for Harry Hardy's story. He must be true to Chris in any case, and he knew her love and admiration for her father were deep and sincere. He could not understand it: he admitted to himself that affection for such a man as the searcher was quite absurd and uncalled for, but he knew full well that the blow would fall upon the girl with crushing force, and his heart fought for her, and every romantic impulse he cherished bade him be leal and bold in the cause of the fair lady whom he had enthroned as the queen of her sex. In the end he resolved that if Harry Hardy had not recognised his assailants he would warn Shine in some way, and when the searcher had made good his escape he would tell the whole truth. This, according to his boyish logic, was fair treatment to all parties, and the resolution brought him some peace of mind.

The appearance of the Waddy bushrangers in the police court excited extraordinary interest at Yarraman, and the Tuesday morning witnessed something very like an exodus from Waddy. Every man and woman of the township who could possibly get away made the journey to Yarraman, and they all went as partisans of the prisoners. In Waddy, Dick and his fellow imps could not be too severely condemned; but Waddy refused to recognise the right of outsiders to abuse them, and however vicious they may have been, it was felt to be the duty of the township to stand by its own as against the 'townies' and the witnesses from Cow Flat.

The court was packed, and most of the people of Waddy had to be content to stand with the crowd that filled the street. An attempt had been made at the last moment to alter the charge against the boys to insulting behaviour, or something equally trivial, and all present in court looked for much amusement. In fact the tremendous bushranging sensation had degenerated into something very like a farce.

The witnesses for the prosecution were the three young men from McIvor's run, who made the gallant attack upon the gang and captured Gable; Billson, the farmer who had been bailed up in his cart; Hogan, the horseman; the boy Mathieson, the tollman, and a woman named Cox.

The young men were now sober and subdued, and the evidence they gave differed materially from the story told to the police on Saturday night when they cantered into Yarraman with their prisoner, drunk and vainglorious. They admitted now that the gang

did not make a very strenuous resistance to their gallant charge, but insisted that the boys were armed with revolvers, and that Gable struggled like a demon; and the old man, standing amongst his fellow prisoners, evidently immensely delighted with the part he was playing, smiled brightly around upon the court and ejaculated 'Oh, I say! Oh, crickey!' *à propos* of nothing in particular.

Billson testified to having been bailed up on the Cow Flat road by a gang of bushrangers, who demanded his money or his life and fired upon him. He described his hairbreadth escape with primitive eloquence, and was certain the gang meant to murder him. He was too agitated at the time to notice whether the bushrangers were men or boys. It was he who overtook the three young men, but they could not be induced to turn back till the boy Mathieson came up with them and declared the highwaymen to be a mob of boys.

Hogan was equally positive about the firearms, and thought he heard the bullets whistling past his ears, but could not swear to it. At this stage the defendants' lawyer, who had been harrying the witnesses with many questions and heaping ridicule upon their devoted heads, called for the prisoners' arms to be produced, and the sight of the toy pistols with their mutton-bone barrels provoked yells of laughter in the court, which were presently echoed in the streets.

But it was not till brawny Mrs. Cox took her stand in the witness-box that the absurdity of the *Mercury's* story and the charge was exposed fully to a delighted audience. Mrs. Cox marched into the box in an aggressive way, saluted the book with an emphatic and explosive kiss, and then stood erect, square-shouldered and defiant, giving the court and all concerned to understand by her attitude that it must not be imagined any advantage could be taken of her. She told her story in a bluff dogmatic way. She was bailed up by the miscreants and scared out of her seven senses. They demanded her money or her life, and she believed that it was their intention to leave her 'welterin' in her gore'; and having said as much she squared round upon the lawyer, arms akimbo and head thrown back, inviting him to come on to his inevitable destruction.

'Come, come, madam,' said the barrister, 'you must not tell us you imagined for a moment you were ever in any serious danger from these terrible fellows.'

'Mustn't! mustn't!' cried Mrs. Cox. 'An', indeed, why not, sir? Who're you to tell me I mustn't?'

Mrs. Cox stopped deliberately and carefully rolled up both sleeves of her dress, and now, unhampered and in customary trim, smote the cedar in front of her and cried :

‘Mustn’t, indeed!’

‘No offence, ma’am,’ said the small lawyer in a conciliatory tone; ‘no offence in the world. Please explain what you did when attacked by the prisoners.’

‘What’d I do? First I said a prayer for me soul.’

‘And then?’

‘And then I grabbed one o’ the young imps, an’ I——’

Here Mrs. Cox’s actions implied that she had a struggling bushranger in her grip. She drew him over her knee, and then, for the education and edification of the court, went through the task of enthusiastically spanking a purely imaginary small boy.

The pantomime was most convincing and provoked roars of laughter that completely drowned the shrill pipe of the policeman fiercely demanding order; and when the noise had subsided Gable, flushed with excitement and with dancing eyes and jigging limbs, cried out ‘Oh, crickey!’ with such gusto that the laughter broke loose again in defiance of all restraint, and was maintained until the chairman of the bench, himself almost apoplectic from his efforts to swallow his mirth, arose and talked of clearing the court; and then the crowd, fearful of missing the fun to come, quietened in a few seconds and the case was resumed.

‘You thrashed the young rip, Mrs. Cox,’ said the lawyer. ‘You did well. A pity you did not serve them all alike and save us the folly of this most ridiculous case.’

‘I did grab another,’ said the witness, ‘an’ I——’ Mrs. Cox repeated her eloquent pantomime.

‘Oh, crickey!’ cried Gable. ‘Oh, I say, here’s a lark!’

‘Silence in court,’ squealed the asthmatical policeman.

‘Excellent,’ said the lawyer. ‘And so, madam, you drove off this desperate and bloodthirsty gang by simply slapping them all round?’

‘Yes, after I’d been assaulted with a goat,’ cried the witness, flushing with a recollection of her wrongs and shaking a formidable fist at the prisoners. ‘After I’d been assaulted with a goat sooled on by one o’ the bla’guards.’

The lawyer spoke a few soothing words :

‘You deserve the thanks of the community, Mrs. Cox, for the businesslike way in which you suppressed this diabolical gang. Your method is in pleasing contrast with the ridiculous effeminacy

of the previous witnesses. I have no doubt you would treat an adult bushranger in exactly the same way.'

'Or a lawyer either,' said Mrs. Cox, detecting sarcasm.

The case was practically decided when Mrs. Cox stepped down. The bench desired to have some evidence as to Gable's character, and leading residents of Waddy described his infirmity, and spoke of him as an entirely harmless and innocent old man. The case was dismissed, but the chairman, in acquitting the prisoners, took occasion to remind their parents that if the excellent example set by Mrs. Cox were followed by them all, it would probably tend to the moral advantage of the boys and the benefit of society at large.

The return to Waddy was something in the nature of a triumphal march in which the late prisoners figured as heroes, but they lost importance immediately after reaching the township. A new topic of great interest had sprung up during the absence of the crowd; news had arrived of Harry Hardy's recovery, and it was known that his injuries were not the result of a fall of reef, but were inflicted by gold-stealers who had got into the mine in some mysterious way and had escaped again just as mysteriously. Already Waddy had decided upon the identity of the culprits who, it was confidently asserted, would be found amongst the small community of Chinamen whose huts were situated on the bank of the creek at a distance of about two miles from the township, and who made a precarious living by fossicking and growing vegetables. Waddy always settled matters of this kind out of hand, and the presence of those Chinamen saved it much mental trouble in accounting for thefts small or great.

Late that night Joe Rogers and the searcher sat together in a hidden place in the corner paddock discussing the turn events had taken. The last three days had told upon Shine, who was pallid, hollow-cheeked, and nervous; he fumbled always with his bent bony fingers bunched behind him, and when in the presence of others twisted and turned his curious feet continuously with a dull anxiety that irritated the men beyond bearing. Now, crouched amongst the scrub by the side of his mate, he whined about their danger.

'We should 'a cleared. We oughter clear now. We'll be nabbed if we stay.'

'We'll be nabbed if we bolt,' replied Rogers. 'The man as cleared now would be spotted as the guilty party, an' half the

p'lice in the country 'd be up an' after him. No, here we are, an' here we stick fer better or worse.'

'But if they've got the gold, why don't they do somethin' ? There's no word of it. Rogers, if you're foolin' me over this——'

'Will you stop twiddlin' those cursed feet of yours an' listen to me? They haven't got the gold, but I think I've guessed who has. That young whelp Haddon.'

'Dickie Haddon? How, how? Where's it now?'

'How in thunder should I know? But I know the troopers didn't get it. They would have made some noise about it afore this. See here, they were huntin' that kid when they went into the quarry. He must 'a hid somewhere about when he heard them comin'; p'raps in that very tree. Then he dragged the gold away before we got back, an' hid it. That's my idea.'

'An' d'ye think he saw us?'

'I don't. He'd 'a split at once.'

'Well, well, an' what'll you do?'

'Collar young Haddon, an' frighten the truth out o' him or break every bone in his cursed skin.'

'But he'd know then, you fool.'

'Will he? I'll take all sorts o' care he doesn't know me, you can take your colonial oath on that.'

'An' if you get the gold back, no dirty tricks. It's halves, you know—fair halves!'

'Yes, an' haven't you always got your share all fair an' square? An' what've you ever done fer it but whimper an' cant an' snuffle, like the cur you are?'

'I was goin' to give it up after this,' whined Shine, disregarding Joe's outburst, 'an' get married again, an' live God-fearin' an' respectable.'

Rogers glared at him in the darkness, and laughed in an ugly way.

'Marry!' he sneered. 'Man, the little widow wouldn't have you. She's waitin' fer Frank Hardy; an', as fer yer God-fearin' life, you're such an all-fired hippercrit, Shine, that I believe you fool yourself that you're a holy man in spite o' everythin', 'pon me soul I do!'

'Ah, Joseph Rogers, the devil may triumph fer a while, but I'm naturally a child o' grace, an' if you'd on'y turn——'

Rogers uttered an oath, and drawing back struck the searcher in the face with his open hand.

'Enough o' that!' he cried. 'None o' your sick'nin' Sunday-school humbug for me, Mr. Superintendent. We've talked o' that before.'

Shine arose, and moved back a few paces.

'I'd better be goin',' he said. 'Tain't fer us to quarrel, Joseph. Leave the usual sign when we're to meet again.'

Shine, bent over his unconscionable feet, stole away amongst the trees, and a few minutes later Rogers moved off slowly in another direction, towards the lights of the Drovers' Arms, and his thoughts as he strolled were not very favourable to his fellow criminal.

'Let me once get my hands on that gold,' he muttered, 'an' I'll bolt for 'Frisco.'

*(To be continued.)*



*Some Experiences of a Commandant  
Prisoners of War, at Deadwood Camp,  
St. Helena. 1900-1901.*

I.

IN November 1900 circumstances arose that led to my being asked to take over the work and responsibilities of Commandant Prisoners of War, at Deadwood Camp. I had already been quartered in the island since the first arrival of the prisoners, in April, 1900, as one of the garrison, or, more accurately, perhaps, as one of the guard specially sent out from England to take charge of the prisoners of war; so at this time my acquaintance with the Boers in that camp was not altogether a new one. Suffice it to say that I accepted the appointment, by no means with any pleasure, but as a public duty, which I thought I ought under the circumstances to perform. It may be of interest to briefly relate the system by which the camp was governed.

To begin with, firstly, there is a Commandant Prisoners of War who is head of the whole camp, and who manages the Boers with regard to discipline, gives passes and paroles for the island, and generally superintends the whole camp. He has under him a personal staff consisting of a sergeant-major, an orderly-room clerk, two military police, and an orderly or two. There is also a quartermaster, a quartermaster-sergeant, and staff, largely supplemented by prisoners of war, to assist in collecting and serving out rations, clothing, &c. There are also three censors, whose duty it is to read all letters that are posted at the camp post-office previously to their being sent to Jamestown for transmission, and to act as interpreters. These gentlemen have orders to destroy all letters of an inflammatory nature, and those touching on politics and on questions of the war, and should only allow certain newspapers to be passed in. With regard to the latter, I fear many more get into

the camp than should have done, through the fact that so many papers, both European and from the Cape, were readily to be bought from tradesmen in the town, besides which, sympathising friends of the Boers in Europe send out large quantities of reading matter which it would be quite impossible, with the strength at our disposal, adequately to censor.

There was also a medical officer attached to the camp.

My own personal work brought me in daily contact with Boers and foreigners of nearly every European nation, and, in fixing on a policy for their treatment, I had to take into consideration the system followed by my predecessor, which was, as regards passes, to make their so-called officers responsible for bringing safely back to camp, by six P.M. every evening, those of their fellow-prisoners whom they had been allowed to take out for a walk. On the whole the system worked well, and comparatively few of them were ever late, and those who were were generally punished by their passes being stopped unless a very good reason was given for the delay. Meanwhile the camp was growing in numbers every month by fresh arrivals from the Cape. Thus, in April, 1900, we started with about one thousand, and by the middle of January 1901 we had in Deadwood Camp about two thousand six hundred. In addition another camp at Broad Bottom had been formed, containing about two thousand; the latter, however, was managed quite separately under its own commandant. I had then to consider whether a system which had worked well with about one thousand prisoners of war could be safely extended when considerably more than twice that number had to be dealt with. The size of the camp was, roughly, about twenty acres, and I had to bear in mind that a large number had already been confined in it, and that it is after all nothing more than a large sheepfold. With regard to accommodation, they are treated as soldiers—*i.e.* twelve are told off to each tent; but to give them more room, and to allow friends to get together, and to let them do a little trading and to establish shops for the sale of their wares, permission was granted to many of them to build huts. These huts were chiefly built of aloe poles and biscuit tins, and at the time I left—July, 1901—there were more than three hundred of them in camp.

In considering the policy to be followed, I had to pay special regard to the character and conduct of the so-called Boer officers. I mean, by this term, those who were returned in the official lists

as officers, many of whom, I fear, would disgrace the name. Old Boers have said to me: 'You don't know, Colonel, how you are being taken in by these men whom you treat as officers; they are not officers at all, and never were.' I thought it wise, on the whole, to extend the passes, so as to give a vent to the camp, which had now assumed such large proportions. My object in extending the passes was to try to give more liberty to the true Veldt Boer, a man who is renowned for his love of freedom, and who naturally hated being obliged to ask a 'scallywag' officer to put his name on a pass for a walk on the island. I was able to accomplish this through the instrumentality of some of the more respectable burghers, and eventually I had quite a large number, all of whom signed a short parole not to try to escape from the island; and they promised also to use their utmost endeavours to keep good order and discipline amongst their fellow-prisoners. I thus had quite a large number who promised their assistance in the preservation of order. Some of these passes were called Church-wardens' Paroles, which were granted to all who had held that office in their own district. Other passes were given to burghers, which were called Burgher Passes, carrying the same privileges as those of the officers—i.e. the burghers were each allowed to take out four men on a pass, or could go out alone, if they preferred to do so, on their own parole, during the camp parole hours, between 8 A.M. and 6 P.M. daily. In addition to the above, the medical officer recommended that, for health's sake, many should be granted passes on application; these were never refused. As there was also a large number of old men in the camp, I deemed it expedient that all over fifty-four years of age should be allowed a walk two or three times a week, and in every case where they had a son or sons in the camp they were allowed to take one with them. Boys, and young men also, who were at work in the schools during the week-days, were often granted passes for Saturdays and Sundays. I may add that hardly ever were any of the above paroles or passes abused in any way.

Prisoners of war were also given passes to visit their friends in hospital, provided they were accompanied by an officer or burgher on parole, and many were allowed to visit Jamestown under similar conditions.

At the end of June, 1901, there were quite four hundred from Deadwood Camp alone earning money outside the camp, either on works for the Colonial Government, Royal Engineers, Army

Service Corps, or with farmers and tradesmen in various parts of the island, the great majority of whom slept out of camp. Special passes were also granted on many occasions to larger bodies going out in charge of several officers for some particular purpose, and passes were always freely granted to a goodly number to attend the funeral of any prisoner of war who died. I think, by briefly explaining the above system, the wildest pro-Boer could not say that the law with regard to prisoners of war was harshly administered. Games of all sorts were freely indulged in in camp, including cricket, football, quoits, lawn tennis, &c.; besides which there were several clubs established and maintained, one, the German Club, where concerts and sing-songs were held, at least once a fortnight; another, the Hollander Club, where similar entertainments were given; there was also a sports club, and a boxing saloon. Any casual observer, walking through the camp, or meeting the Boers on the highway, could not but observe what a cheerful aspect the majority of them maintained, although their life must of necessity have been very monotonous. Beneath this outward cloak of apparent cheerfulness no doubt there were many hidden sorrows, as I have found out on very many occasions when granting an interview to those who sought it. I may say that I felt it my duty to see every one who wished to see me. In this way I kept thoroughly in touch with the whole camp, and learnt to know very fairly well the characters of all; including the bitter and irreconcilable section. The Boer is a two-sided individual: on the one hand he is decidedly slim and double-faced; on the other, he is obstinate and ignorant to a degree, full of strife, ready and willing to be stirring up bitter feeling against the English. This latter propensity was carried to such a pitch in their camps that it led to gross and malicious intimidation, and, in one case, to arson; and has led to the necessity of establishing separate peace camps, where those who are prepared to accept the inevitable, and submit to British rule, and who are anxious to return to their homes, could express their views freely to one another without fear of threats and violence to their persons from their fellow-prisoners. I will endeavour to relate briefly the system of intimidation that was going on. The irreconcilable party, with Commandants Wolmarans and Eloff at their head, had established what they were pleased to call a vigilance committee, consisting of about forty members, all irreconcilables of the worst description, and many of them, in my

opinion, real bad characters. Some of them were Hollanders, some ex-Staats artillerymen, and a few Johannesburg detectives, besides—to their shame be it said—one or two Englishmen. These men used to make it their business to go round the camp at night-time, listening to the conversation of others, and if in their opinion the slightest tendency was shown, or opinion expressed, in favour of ending the war by giving in, or a wish to take the oath of allegiance, if allowed to return to South Africa, they became marked men at once, and were often insulted, disfigured by having their beards cut off, and threatened with other violence. This sort of intimidation had been going on in a mild way for some months, but nothing very serious happened. There was no device so mean that these men would not adopt it, to try to elicit the opinion of those whom they suspected of having English tendencies; they would even try to draw others out by expressing pro-English views themselves in the course of conversation, and then round on them. To keep the bitter feeling against the English alive in the camp, the wildest rumours were originated, and the most lying telegrams constantly manufactured, and spread about the camp. The ignorant Boer would go to one of the chief Boer commandants and ask if the information contained any truth. Of course they always received an answer in the affirmative; then they would go back to their friends, and say: 'Commandant So-and-so says it is quite correct'; and very soon more news of an equally virulent description would be circulated. In this way race hatred and vindictive feeling against the English are kept alive; and the assurance given that not only will they regain their independence, but that Cape Colony and Natal will be incorporated in the Republics. I think it was early in June that the Commandant Prisoners of War at Broad Bottom Camp published a notice to the effect that those who were willing to take the oath of allegiance should give in their names to him, with the view of their being the first to return to South Africa. This spread a certain amount of consternation amongst the bitter party; they held meetings, spread more lies, and determined to do all in their power to prevent anyone saying he would be willing to take the oath, even if asked. They also appear about this time to have made up their minds to expel from their camps, by intimidation, those whom they suspected of English tendencies. On June 20, 1901, I received the following somewhat remarkable letter from Commandant S. Eloff, of Krugersdorp racecourse fame:—

*'To Lieut.-Colonel A. L. Paget, Commandant Prisoners of War.*

*'Deadwood Camp, St. Helena.'*

*'SIR, —All right-thinking men cannot be otherwise than unanimous in agreeing that a speedy cessation of hostilities in South Africa is not only desirable, but is a matter of vital importance to the future existence and status of that country, and that the mere desire to permanently extinguish the malevolent influences to which that country is subject is in itself inadequate unless supported by an energetic and potential effort towards its consummation.*

*'That there is a report current amongst us to the effect that a certain number of prisoners of war in Deadwood Camp have applied—under encouragement of the military authorities—to be sent back to the Republics, and have either taken, or intend to take, an oath of allegiance to Great Britain, will, I hope, be deemed sufficient to warrant the presumption on my part in approaching you with a view to obtaining from you officially either a denial or a confirmation of this report; and, if the latter, a statement of the privileges intended to be conferred on these men.*

*'As an officer of the Republican forces, and being intimately acquainted with the innate peculiarities, the grievances, and the aspiring political tendencies of the Republicans, I will not conceal from you my present opinion that such a procedure will not only fail in its object of an amicable settlement, but will, on the contrary, tend to a prolongation of hostilities, and engender a still bitterer feeling of race hatred than at present exists; but I am open to conviction, and my own private feelings with regard to the English are possibly very different to what you would expect or think.*

*'In my opinion, the re-establishment of peace is only to be obtained in one way—a way of which no one seems to have thought at present; but which, if properly carried out, would not only bring the war to a speedy end, but would tend to the future benefit of South Africa as a country. Thanking you in anticipation of a speedy and satisfactory reply.—I have the honour to be, &c.*

*'(Signed) S. ELOFF, Commandant.'*

I gave no written reply to the above letter, but sent for Eloff and asked him what his object was in writing it, and ascertained



from him that the whole thing was just what I expected—viz. to find out if any of the prisoners of war were being asked to take, or had taken, the oath of allegiance. I told him candidly that none had been asked, neither had any taken it. With reference to the latter part of his letter he would not give me his views, but said he would think the matter over. It was just about this time that a somewhat serious disturbance took place at night in camp. A hut, having been saturated with paraffin oil, was set on fire, and a number of prisoners of war were intimidated by a parcel of bullies, who surrounded their huts and threatened them; and, in one case, a hut was entered and ransacked in search of a document which did not exist, but which the raiders believed to be there, containing a list of many hundreds of names of Boers who had taken, or were ready to take, the oath of allegiance. Strong military precautions had to be taken for the rest of that night to keep the peace, and this was the beginning of the exodus of the peace party. For the next few days they came out, in batches of from two to thirty or forty at a time, to seek the protection of the authorities, and to pray that the British flag might fly over them for ever. These men describe their life in camp as having been a perfect hell, and ascribed most of the mischief to the evil influence of the Hollander element. For the first few days there was considerable feeling shown, when anyone came out to claim the protection of the peace camp; missiles were thrown, and there was a good deal of shouting and booing from the rowdy section; many came out late at night or very early in the morning to avoid the epithets hurled at them by their compatriots. To their credit, be it said, they showed no animosity on these occasions to the authorities.

There were constant rumours in camp of the wildest description. I need hardly say that, personally, I gave very little credit to any of them. One, perhaps, is worth mentioning. Towards the end of April I was informed that the violent section had held a meeting, and resolved on making a sudden rush on the camp of the Gloucester Regiment on some dark night. There was to be a simultaneous rising at Broad Bottom Camp, and they boasted that, by May 13, 1901, they would have possession of the island. I never believed for one moment that they would attempt anything so foolish; but it was deemed wise, under the circumstances, to take extra military precautions. Needless to say, nothing came of it, except that Commandant Wolmarans came out, at about 7 P.M. one evening, to see the captain of the guard, and to ask for an inter-

view at once with the Commandant Prisoners of War, as he had been informed that the authorities had heard of this rumour, which he wished to deny emphatically, and which he described as 'a hellish lie.' He declared that his object in reporting the matter at once to the captain of the guard was that he was afraid that some of the young sentries might be too much on the alert, and possibly shoot without sufficient provocation. The following morning I sent for this paragon of all that is good (from a pro-Boer point of view), Commandant Wolmarans, and told him that I was well aware of the rumour, but that I did not believe for one moment that the prisoners of war would do anything so foolish as to commit suicide upon the points of our bayonets, and in the face of our Maxim fire. He, of course, declared that there was absolutely no truth in the rumour; but I have since been told, on very reliable authority, that the matter was discussed and a regular plan formulated, but afterwards abandoned. There were constant rumours of threatened intimidation to the peace party, and I was often told that it would lead to murder in the camp. I gave out that if any one was in fear of his life, he might seek the protection of the captain of the guard. One very respectable lad, whose father was known to be working for the British in the Transvaal, had a very rough time of it, but he never complained. The heads of the vigilance committee never appeared in any proposed act of violence; they sent out their satellites in greater or less numbers at night to do the dirty work, when it would be very difficult to identify any one. Besides this, there was the natural reluctance of those who were being intimidated to give the bullies away, for fear of future consequences. With the establishment of peace camps, and the elimination of some of the worst agitators from the large camp, I trusted that a better state of feeling would soon be manifested. I knew for a fact that there were hundreds more, of the better sort, ready and willing to join the peace party on the first favourable opportunity; meanwhile, they said they were holding back for fear of becoming marked men. It was a great pleasure, during the latter stages of my appointment, to visit daily the peace camp, and to discuss freely and openly with its occupants the general situation, both as regards life in the camps and prospects of peace, as well as a return to their homes in South Africa. Many of these men were highly educated, clever, and far-seeing, who had known and recognised for a long time that the game was up, and that those who returned must make up their minds to live under British rule. It

was also a pleasure to see, in the peace camp, the altered look on the faces of those who were now comparatively happy and contented. One of the first things that they asked was to be allowed to fly the Union Jack over their camp. One of them, on being questioned as to whether he would like to return to the big camp, replied: 'No, sir; I would rather die on the point of a respectable British bayonet than do so!' There was one case in which a son sought the protection of the peace camp, and his father remained in the other; the latter was very irate at his son going over, and came to ask me to be allowed to have an interview with him. He said his son had been led away, and if he were allowed a few minutes' conversation with him, he felt confident he could persuade his son to return, and that he was prepared to give him protection, if necessary. I replied that, as the lad had sought my protection, I could not on any account allow him to return, unless he especially wished to do so. Neither would I allow the father the interview he sought; but I promised to see the son myself on the subject, and said that if he wished to return he might do so. I interviewed the son, and, needless to say, he declined most emphatically to go back to the other camp. About this time I received another very remarkable letter, evidently written by an ignorant Boer, with a very slight knowledge of English, in which he implored me to take Commandant Eloff away from the camp, and treat him kindly. In his opinion, by so doing, we should very soon find as many as eight hundred prisoners of war ready and willing to join the peace party. Before I received this letter I had already decided that Eloff was one of those whom it was necessary to remove for the well-being of the camp in general. I have every reason to believe that the writer of the letter was right in his surmise. I may here refer to two regrettable incidents, whereby two prisoners of war lost their lives. One occurred shortly after our arrival on the island, and before I had anything to do with the camp.

Briefly stated, a prisoner of war was shot by a sentry when in the act of climbing the wire fence round the enclosure; the other case occurred in February, 1901, and it will be necessary to relate a few facts in connection with this incident, to show the provocation received, before passing a final judgment. Towards the latter end of January and early in February, 1901, it was frequently reported to me by the captain of the guard that stones were thrown at the sentries at night-time from within the enclosure, and I was asked to take steps to prevent it. With this object in

view, I summoned some of the chief Boer officers, and fully explained to them what a dangerous and cowardly practice it was, and asked them to use their influence to prevent its recurrence. This they promised to do, and said also that they would form a committee of camp police to patrol the camp at night-time, and try, if possible, to catch the offenders. I fully concurred in what they proposed. I also summoned a meeting of Boers in the camp, at or near one of the places from which I was given to understand that stones had been thrown. I had it explained to them, both in Dutch and English, how dangerous a practice it was; I also threatened that it might lead to their huts being abolished. They received my address kindly, and some even remarked, 'Why don't your sentries shoot?' I replied that it was no wish of mine to shoot unnecessarily defenceless prisoners of war. I also had notices posted in the camp warning them against stone-throwing. I reported the matter to the officer commanding the troops, who also lectured some of the chief Boer officers on the subject. Notwithstanding this warning, shortly afterwards stone-throwing again took place, and a sentry, after being thrown at repeatedly, had his face cut open by some missile, and could stand it no longer, so he fired, with the result that another poor wretch was sent to his doom. A court of inquiry was held, and the Boers had the impudence to allege that no stone-throwing took place from within the enclosure, but that the sentries threw stones at each other to keep themselves awake.

To my mind it is beyond a shadow of doubt that the loss of life on this occasion was entirely brought about by the cowardly action of some of the prisoners of war. After this, it is almost needless to relate, stone-throwing entirely ceased.

Many of the Boer officers have been allowed to live outside the camp on parole; they usually hire some small tumble-down cottage, do it up with Boer labour from the camp, and settle down. Very few restrictions were placed on them; they had to report themselves once or twice a week to the captain of the guard; some had also to obtain a pass before visiting Jamestown. These prisoners of war gave absolutely no trouble; but I believe, occasionally, that one of their cottages was used as a meeting-place, by some of the violent section, to discuss the political situation. There have been several mild attempts at escape, but without assistance from outside, in my opinion, escape is impossible. One very feeble attempt was made by Commandant Eloff and four others. When out on pass they collected a certain amount of provisions, and

hired donkeys from the natives for its conveyance, and made their way to Sandy Bay, on the south side of the island, where a few native fishermen live. Here they attempted to secure a boat from the fishermen; but either these were above a bribe, or else the would-be fugitives had not sufficient money with them to strike a bargain. Anyway, the fishermen stoutly resisted the abstraction of their boat, and one of their number retired up country at top speed and reported the matter to his Excellency the Governor. The military authorities were soon on the alert, and a picket was sent down to arrest them, and they were brought ignominiously back to camp, amidst the jeers of many of their companions. Naturally, after this escapade, the passes of these five men were stopped for many a long day. I used to be much amused occasionally, after this occurrence, by some of Eloff's friends amongst the Boer officers coming to ask me to be allowed to take him out again on pass. I always refused, and said I should continue to do so till he chose to make some apology for his foolish attempt to escape. This was a long time coming, as Eloff is not a man who likes to ask a favour from the British; but, in the end, he sent me a letter, a copy of which follows:—

*'To Lieut.-Colonel Paget, Commanding Prisoners of War,  
Deadwood.'*

*'Deadwood Camp, 15/6/1901.'*

'SIR,—I have the honour respectfully to request that you will grant me permission to take a walk on the island now and then, in charge of another officer, as was formerly allowed. I must express my regret for the foolish attempt to escape, which led to my being restricted. Had I not been misled by another, who by his specious lies persuaded me, I should never have made the attempt.—I have the honour, &c.

*'(Signed) S. ELOFF, Commandant.'*

I replied to the above by saying that I should offer no objection to his going on pass in charge of another officer.

Other attempts at escape were occasionally tried. On one occasion quite a considerable quantity of provisions and water was found by the police hidden in one of the valleys. The method to be adopted was to acquire a boat by some means and get away to sea, on the chance of being picked up by some passing ship. However, by seizing the provisions this attempt was frustrated, the loot sold, and the discoverer rewarded. On another occasion a Russian ship

arrived with a cargo of coal for the island. There appeared to be some mystery about her, and she was said to have called at some French port on her way out from Cardiff. When she had been in harbour only a few days her captain met with an accident—whether by misadventure or design I cannot say; but he died, and was buried in St. Helena, and the chief officer of the ship succeeded to the command.

During the whole of her stay she was closely watched by H.M. guard-ship. One day, two French prisoners of war swam off to her, but received no sympathy, were arrested, and shortly afterwards sent back to camp under escort.

A further attempt was made by three more prisoners, who swam off one night, boarded an American whaler, eluded the vigilance of the night watchman, and stowed themselves away in the hold. Unfortunately for them, one of their number left a waistbelt on deck. This was found in the morning by one of the crew. A search was made; they were discovered, handed over in a state of nudity to the man-of-war, and sent from thence back to Deadwood Camp. I think after these various attempts the most ardent amongst them recognised the futility of any further endeavour; but as they had some clever men amongst them, one could never tell what the next move would be.

Deadwood Camp itself in some respects resembled a small town, where every sort of industry was carried on. There were the inevitable rows of tents, and beyond them was 'Tin Town,' where huts were laid out in streets, with a space of three feet between each, to allow a free passage of air. The huts were of all sizes, to accommodate from two to half a dozen, and each street was named—usually after some place in the Transvaal or Orange River Colony. Every hut was numbered, so that a proper register could be kept. The prisoners often sold their stands to each other, and the competition was always keen. The huts were so made that they could be shifted, on very short notice, to fresh ground, and a very curious sight it was to see them moving camp. Their industry was marvellous. They were especially good at making walking-sticks, paper-knives, baskets, and fancy toys of all descriptions. Some of the Hollanders were excellent cabinet-makers. A large number went in for cooking, pastry-making, and fancy sweets. Their ingenuity in making cooking-ranges from old tins was extraordinary. Small blacksmiths' shops were started by a few, and the way in which they made the bellows and forge was wonderful—more especially if the material at hand was considered



As bone-carvers, many of them excelled. One man made quite a creditable turning-lathe, which was usually driven by the wind, which, at Deadwood Camp, blew with monotonous consistency.

I talked to hundreds of them on the war. Many of the extreme section were still very bitter, and argued that they still must win (with the help of the Lord), and get back their independence. Others there were—and they were then a large and increasing party—who knew all was lost, and were only too anxious to return to South Africa on any terms. Their ignorance was often exemplified by what they wrote home to their friends. Some said: 'Surely the Lord is only playing some game with us to punish us for our past sins; but all will come right in time.' Others wrote and said: 'We don't mind if we are kept prisoners of war here for the next five years, if only we can get our independence in the end.' But I doubt the sincerity of those who thus expressed themselves. A very large number got letters from their friends in South Africa, saying that they hoped the Boers would soon give in, as it was useless to go on fighting any longer. Many an old Boer came to me and asked me to try to find out what had become of his wife and family, as he had not heard for so many months. In most cases I was able to trace their relations through the District Commissioner, and I will say they always appeared truly grateful.

As regards their religion, I can but look upon the true Boer as an ignorant fanatic, very little above the level of the Dervishes of the Soudan. The Boers at church in camp are a very curious sight. They gather together in a large circle and squat, are most attentive to the minister, and are very fond of singing hymns, but all the tunes have a monotonous similarity. Some appear to be singing nearly all day long, beginning very early in the morning. The Boer proper, as a rule, does not drink, but he can and does swear quite as much as any other nation, more especially so when thinking of the war and the English. It never appears to occur to them that they started the war by invading Natal and Cape Colony. The causes of the war, they nearly all say, were the Jameson raid, the capitalists, and the press. There is absolutely no doubt that their leaders thought they could drive the English from South Africa. I have talked to many Englishmen who were living in Johannesburg before the war broke out, and they are unanimously of the opinion that the war must be fought out to the bitter end, and not one vestige of power left in the hands of the Boers, and that conciliation and kindness must not be attempted until they have sued for peace. As an illustration

of what the Boer thinks of power, I will mention a small incident which occurred in the camp. A man, suspected of peace proclivities, was brought before the Boer vigilance committee to be questioned, and, before leaving, S. Eloff said to him : ' You see what power we hold in the camp ; the Commandant is not going to have it all his own way.' In touching on the character of the prisoners of war, as a whole, it is necessary to divide them into three classes. First, the Veldt Boer, who, although very ignorant, is certainly a very quiet, peace-loving, law-abiding person, who would no more think of doing anything against the authorities than he would of trying to fly. Secondly, there is the town Boer, who perforce has become mixed up with politics, and thus has inherited an inveterate hatred against the English, and whose mission in life appears to be to disseminate among his farmer neighbours everything bad he can think of against them. Thirdly, the foreigner, which includes Hollanders, Scandinavians, Germans, and a few from nearly every other country in Europe. These are the men who stir up and keep alive the race hatred in the camp. Many of them are very clever and highly educated. They went to the late South African Republic, and wormed their way into positions, in many cases of a responsible nature, under that corrupt government. Their day is now gone, and they know it ; hence the bitterness of feeling. A highly respectable Boer remarked to me one day : ' The Hollanders have been the curse of our country ; they have had nearly every good appointment given them that Mr. Kruger had to dispose of. You will find in this camp that they are a curse to it, and they will, by their sneakish manners, and under a cloak of deceit, obtain every advantage from you that it is possible to get.' His words have proved quite true, the Hollanders now in camp have obtained greater advantages and better positions than the Boers ; for instance, they run the camp post-office ; a Hollander or Scandinavian is always foreman of works for any of the departments employing any large number of men ; they have been constituted heads of committees for clothing prisoners of war, and there are endless other means by which they have worked their way to power and good appointments ; and although they are always courteous and civil, they are quite the most bitter opponents of the English in the camp. Instead of being thankful for any privilege granted by the authorities owing to their superior education, there is no doubt that they use their advantages to keep alive amongst the simple brother Boer an inveterate

hatred of the British. I firmly believe that if all foreigners were taken away, and sent to camps where their influence could not be felt by the Boers, the latter would very soon alter their opinions, from anxiety to get back to their wives and families, if from no other cause. If the foreigners were sent to Salisbury Plain, or the Falkland Islands, and kept in strict confinement till the end of the war, there would eventually be far less trouble. There are a few harmless men among them, mostly French and German—free lances who don't know either the Dutch or English languages; and the Government might, with advantage from a pecuniary point of view, send such back to their own countries on parole.

A. L. PAGET.

*(To be continued.)*

## *Dolly and Dick.*

### I.

PEACE held sway in the land, and the arm of her empire was heavy. A drowsy warm breeze came rustling from the river and stirred the budding beeches by the old city wall. Wood-pigeons talked in persistent monotone in the elms, and a lonely thrush found spirit to sing. Inside the quad was a peace more profound and sleepier: a boy in his shirt-sleeves stood at the foot of a staircase and gaped amiably at the sun-dial; the porter's cat washed herself benignly in the porch; and the college that she owned slumbered on in the warm spring afternoon—slumbered deep in the afternoon of an Oxford Sunday.

An immaculate undergraduate came in briskly, and the cat stopped her ablutions to watch him with pained surprise. He walked across the quad, stopped, and shouted upwards:

'Dick! Di-ick!' No one answered; the boy grinned. 'Dick! Ellesmere!' but the college slumbered placidly. Then its visitor ran up the stairs. He flung open the door of a room, and:

'You lazy rotter!' said he.

A big man, sprawling all over the sofa in pyjamas, turned on his elbow.

'Wha'?' he asked placidly.

His visitor pushed back his hat and sat in a basket chair.

The room was magnificently untidy. The remnants of a late lunch lay with a dissipated air on the table, among many pipes and one or two open books. It was a very typical college-room. Along one wall of it hung an oar, with one picture below it in a dark frame—the Mona Lisa.

'Slack beast you are, Dick,' said his visitor.

Dick nodded.

'Cigarette?' he inquired, and pitched two boxes at his visitor.

The visitor caught one and missed the other then leant back

in his chair and picked up painfully the scattered cigarettes. Dick Ellesmere laughed.

'Wonderful man, Upton, wonderful man! Ought to be a god! Make a ripping god!'

'I'd make you sit up,' said Upton.

Dick shook his head.

'That's pride—sinful pride.'

Upton returned to the point:

'Look here, Dick, I came round to——'

'I know. You always come round to do something. That's why you please me so. So awful purposeful. Wonderful man!'

'——To take you to the Farnhams.'

'Good Lord! Do I look like going to the Farnhams? Think of your wonderful collar arm-in-arm with my pyjamas!'

Upton came across and stood over him.

'Get up and dress!'

'Lord, no! Run away to your Farnhams. I adore dons and their wives; they're so strenuous. Mrs. Farnham'll talk literature; and you'll talk it quite well. You shine—like your boots. I shouldn't shine. I don't want to shine.'

'Mrs. Farnham likes you, you know.' Dick yawned. 'She asked me to bring you round.'

'Wha'?'

Upton repeated. Dick turned over.

'Go away, Upton; go and talk about Tolstoi. Go and read him. I don't like being bored. When's the kiddy coming back?'

'Kiddy? Oh, yes; she is back.'

Dick sat up; stood up; hitched up his pyjamas; took Upton by the shoulders and shot him into a chair.

'Upton, you mean beastly well. I'll get rid of you.'

He vanished into his bedroom.

'How's the boat going?' Upton asked through the open door.

'The boat's of the devil! I've been trying permutations and combinations. It hasn't been out two days the same. They're getting ra-ather distressed. They are'—he spoke in the intervals of splashing—'unkind enough—to believe—I'm rotting.'

'You probably are.'

Dick appeared struggling into a shirt.

'It's very true, Upton. I probably am. It's so much more amusing.'

He vanished.

'And you'll probably rot the boat.'

There was no answer. Very soon Dick came out, putting on his coat. Upton got up.

'You've been quick enough. You can be when you like,' he complained. Dick smiled.

As they walked Upton said many things that were very true of the vices of Dick Ellesmere as captain of the college boats. Dick agreed.

The garden was girt about with a grey stone wall. In the shade thrown by a corner of that wall sat Mrs. Farnham and her visitors. Two uncomfortable undergraduates examined their boots and laughed with effort at the jokes of her husband. Dick and Upton came down the lawn, and Mrs. Farnham looked up quickly. A change could not be for the worse. The conversation brightened. Upton took charge, and was perfectly ready to declare a most just opinion on all things in the universe. The two uncomfortable undergraduates lifted their eyes from their boots and talked of rowing and rowing-shop to Dick. Dick, tilting his hat over his eyes, listened sedately, and said, when inevitable, 'Yes' and 'No.' The two departed. Farnham looked at Dick and smiled.

'The Blue does not talk rowing to the vulgar?' he said quietly; for, liking Dick, he desired to attend to Dick's soul.

'I suppose it did look like side; but, hang it, rowing-shop—ugh! Hullo!'

Down the lawn from the house came a little girl, running with twinkling white feet and floating curls. She laughed as she came nearer.

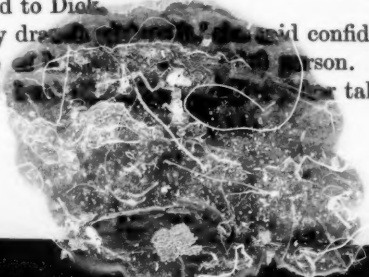
'Ooo, Mithter Dick!' said she, and she ran to Dick's knee and put up her face to be kissed.

Dick stooped and kissed her stolidly. Over his head Farnham's eyes met Mrs. Farnham's, and demonstrated amused surprise.

The small girl leant against Dick's knee and looked calmly round.

'I hope you are twite well, Mithter Upton,' she said with great care, and Upton unwisely laughed. Dolly put up her little chin and turned to Dick.

'Dolly draughted the garden,' she said confidentially. Like fairies, she spoke of the garden. Dick set her on his knee, and she talked as she liked in his ear.





More people came in; among them the tall spare figure of another don of Dick's college. His eyes ran over the little group. He saw the little girl on Dick's huge knee, her pale cheek and earnest eyes close to Dick's sleepy, sunburnt, powerful face, and his lips twitched.

'Mithter Dick, father thinkth you are lathy. He told me,' said Dolly softly.

'He's very much right, Dolly,' said Dick, and he smiled.

'Dolly don't,' said Dolly, with emphasis. 'Dolly'th coming to thee the boat row,' she added by a transition obvious to her mind. 'You do row, don't you?' And Dick, who had rowed two winning races at Putney, admitted it.

'I do want to thee a bump,' Dolly remarked. 'You will make a bump, won't you?'

Dick became interested in his college boat, and, somewhat to his own surprise, he answered:

'We'll try.'

Upton strolled through the shrubbery with the newly arrived don.

'The married don, my dear Upton, is like tragedy. He purifies us by pity and fear. His wife talks of Tolstoi, whom I cannot read. He, like Adam, works in a garden. I should like to be married as I got drunk—once. You never got drunk?'

Upton became uncomfortable. The unexpected annoyed him.

'A man looks such an ass,' he observed.

'The common lot,' said Caversham. 'So, I suppose, does Ellesmere just now, eh?' He glanced quickly at Upton. Upton laughed.

'He did look queer with the baby, didn't he?'

'A scene from the drama,' said Caversham.

'Melodrama,' said Upton with a laugh.

'You are perfectly right. It is melodrama. I shouldn't have thought you would have seen that. That is why our would-be tragedians, like the impossible Schopenhauer, are so amusing. What do you think of Ellesmere?'

Upton was relieved. He was back again with the comprehensible.

'I'm not sure of his First,' said he.

Caversham laughed.

'My dear Upton, the terminus of the world is not in the Schools.'

'Oh, I should think he'd make a good business man if he wakes up!'

Caversham smiled.

'I don't see him in an office,' said he.

'What do you think yourself, Mr. Caversham?'

'I've no means of thinking. I should compare him to a man called Slane—if you've heard of him.'

'He went to the dogs,' said Upton quickly.

They walked on in silence.

'In his day Mr. Farnham was not married,' said Caversham, and they came back towards the lawn. Dick was telling a story, and Dolly listened nestling against him with upturned face and big eyes.

'There in full face of him, there in the gate, stood a fairy. A little fairy in a dress pale-green like the apples. She didn't say anything, she pointed with a dark silver wand. And the boy looked back at the devils, who pushed him the other way, and back at the fairy, and back again at them. Then he sprang at the devils and closed——'

'And he won, Mithter Dick?' said Dolly breathlessly.

Dick laughed.

'Oh, yes, he won. And when he stood up from the fight the fairy was gone. But he went her way.'

'How good!' said Dolly. 'Thank you, Mithter Dick!'

She drew his head down and kissed him twice. Upton came out of the shrubbery and saw her little white arm round Dick's neck.

'Well, I'm hanged!' said he.

'I say, Dick, what were you doing to Dolly Farnham?' he asked as they walked back to college with Caversham.

'Fairy tale!' said Dick, curtly.

'Great heavens! I——'

'I knew you read Uhland, Ellesmere,' said Caversham quietly. He smiled. 'You startled me when you brought him into an essay.'

Dick laughed. 'Yes, it was one of the only two you did for me last term.'

And Upton, walking on, wondered who Uhland might be. He preferred not to ask.

That night after Hall two of the great ones of the college boat mounted together to Dick's room. They opened the door, and it was dark inside but for the red glow of a pipe.

'I say, Dick, now, what about this wretched boat? What is the crew going to be?'

Dick said nothing, and the other man chimed in plaintively: 'Not goin' to rot it about any more, Dick? Begin trainin' to-morrow. An' we haven't been together a day.'

Then out of the darkness Dick laughed.

'My children, we will not rot. Here is our magnificent boat: ' He drawled out the names of the crew. So they stayed for some time talking in the dark, and finally the two departed with a last

'Well, ought to be good enough. 'Night, Dick.'

Dick rose lazily, struck a match, and lit a lamp. He walked over to the Mona Lisa.

'Yes, old lady, we ought to be good enough,' he said aloud, and he smiled. And the Mona Lisa smiled at him with the smile of understanding.

## II.

'YES, Dick, you have grown,' said Caversham.

He lit his cigar carefully and looked up at Dick through the smoke. Dick, standing in front of the fire, put his coffee-cup on the mantel-shelf.

'I've tried. There was plenty of need that I should.'

'I think you had always the root of the matter. You had a sublime scorn for the non-essential. You thought me a non-essential.'

Dick laughed. 'No; only your lectures.'

'They are dull but sound; you were never either. Well—I read the great book, you know,' he paused. Dick flung away his cigar and took up a pipe. Caversham watched him. Outside on the asphalt a hansom swept by with jingle and clatter.

'And you haven't been in Oxford for eight years?' said Caversham abruptly.

Dick shook his head. 'I've been all round the world and back—and never there.'

'It is very like her,' said Caversham thoughtfully.

Dick tumbled into a chair and took up an ivory horn, the trophy of some flying visit to Lagos. He did not answer.

'I said you had grown. I think that book is good. I believe other people will think so. . . . But it is strange that you have never seen her since.'

Dick sat silent, puffing at his pipe; the heavy blue Latakia smoke hung mistily about his head. 'I have, you know—often' said he.

Caversham with his little finger knocked the ash of his cigar into the fire.

“ ‘Your young men shall see visions,’ ” he quoted with a smile, ‘and we—dream dreams.’ He lay back in his chair, with the smile still on his lips. His eyes were closed. Dick said nothing.

There was a knock at the door.

‘Will you see a gentleman, sir?’ said Dick’s man.

‘Who is it? Eh? Oh, Upton, come in!’

‘Heard you were back in England, Dick. So I was passing this way, and I——’

‘Lord, don’t apologise,’ said Dick quickly, and Caversham shook hands leisurely.

‘And what have you been doing, Dick?’ said Upton, briskly lighting a cigar.

‘To and fro in the earth—like the devil.’

‘I wish you’d settle down,’ said Upton didactically.

‘The prayer of the official, my dear Upton. How is our excellent Home Office?’ said Caversham.

‘Thank you, our condition is satisfactory,’ said Upton stiffly. ‘But don’t you think Dick ought to do something, Mr. Caversham? I’ve read some of your things, you know, Dick, and I think some of them are good. I showed them to Langham of our department, a person to whose opinion I attach much weight, and he agreed with me. You should write a book.’

Dick’s eyes twinkled. ‘Wherefore a book?’ said he.

‘Because—and Langham agrees with this—you cannot obtain the position to which your talents entitle you without.’

‘Deuced lot of trouble,’ said Dick.

‘I have always thought, Dick, that you were lacking in energy and concentration.’

Dick rose, walked across the room, and came back with a book.

‘There you are; comes out to-morrow,’ said he.

‘Really, Dick, I had no idea—may I take this? I am very much obliged.

In a little while Upton went away.

‘How he loves to preach!’ said Caversham, and yawned.

‘What a soul-destroying place his office must be!’

‘He never had but a little one,’ said Caversham.

Dick poured out whisky and filled the glasses. He sat down and drank. Looking through the facets of the glass, he spoke slowly:

‘Well, I began with little things, you know—tried effects—

and tried what I was worth—and waited. Then I did this—it's about as good as I can do. And we'll see.' Caversham nodded. He appreciated the honour of confidences from Dick Ellesmere.

'Yes, you have waited. I admire that. You meant to do something—before——?' And Dick nodded.

### III.

IN the May of that year Dick Ellesmere came cycling down the towpath at Oxford, stopped and dismounted opposite his college barge, walked to the steps, and shouted across the river to the boatman. Tom the boatman, stepping into his punt, shifted his cap, and puckered his eyes, staring curiously through the sunlight at Dick.

The punt came alongside, and Tom, laughing, touched his cap.

'Why, I thought I knew the look of you, sir. 'Afternoon.'

Dick shook hands.

'Eight years since I saw you, Tom. How are things going?'

Tom looked doleful:

'We ain't what we was, sir. Ten places we've gone down since your day. An' this year—well, there's a fortnight left, but I can't say as we've got a good boat. Did you 'appen to be stayin' up, sir?'

'Staying over the races, Tom. So they're bad this year, are they?' He turned round to look at a boat rowing in to its barge with much splashing.

'You 'aven't seen our rowin' since you went down, sir,' said Tom, twisting the punt alongside the barge. 'I don't know as you was ever very keen on the college rowin', sir?' he looked thoughtfully at Dick. Dick sat himself down on the edge of the barge and filled a pipe.

'Think I was very keen on anything, Tom?' said he, and his eyes twinkled.

'I dunno as I'd say you was, sir,' Tom admitted, unfastening and refastening the punt chain. 'I remember as after you went 'ead of the river you rowed very slack, sir. No, sir, we ain't got a good boat. I was thinkin' if you was a-stayin' for a bit you might give 'em a bit of coachin'.' He looked doubtfully at Dick. 'You was always a very good coach, sir.' Dick lit his pipe. Then he stood up suddenly; down the river, beyond the boathouse he caught the flash of red and green oars. The boatman stood

up, too, and together they watched. The boat came nearer; she rolled uncomfortably, and the rattle of the riggers was long drawn out. Dick shifted his pipe in his teeth.

'They're bad, Tom—da-amned bad,' he drawled.

'Yes, sir, they ain't good,' said Tom.

He held up his hand and the rowing stopped, and the boat slid alongside. Dick watched the men as they got out and tumbled into the barge.

'Who's been coaching, Tom?' he asked quietly.

'We ain't 'ad no reg'lar coach, sir. Just anyone as we could git.'

'Humph!' said Dick. 'Well,' he dropped his voice lower still, 'I'll take 'em over the races—if they like.'

Tom's face brightened.

'Would you now, sir?' he said quickly, and hurried away to the captain.

After dinner that night Dick sat in Caversham's rooms.

'I'm going to coach the Eight,' said Dick.

Caversham, reaching among his books for an old Malory, turned suddenly:

'To coach—oh, I perceive—dimly. You are always worth thinking about, because you have a tendency to be reasonable. But I thought the boat was very bad?'

'Been badgered. I'm going to coax 'em,' said Dick.

'Why?' said Caversham sharply.

Dick laughed.

'It's deuced complex reason,' said he.

Caversham put the tips of his fingers together and looked over his eye-glasses at Dick.

'You were once slack; and probably you repent. It is an expensive luxury, repentance. Also you would like everything glorious when—she—returns. Ah! Will you do anything with them?'

Dick nodded, and Caversham laughed quietly.

Dick Ellesmere, turned of thirty, was more popular than ever had been his forerunner Dick Ellesmere, undergraduate. His crew flourished like the green bay-tree. On them he lavished a comforting wit and a very thorough confidence, and they did not leave him without reward. In the week before the races he met on the towpath a rowing man of his own day. Dick's boat had just rowed half the course, and lay for a minute eased by Freewater Stone.



Yes, they're not beautiful,' said Dick. 'But they'll go, you'll see—go like hell.'

At the end of that week they rowed their last course, and the boat came up past the barges, ugly but fast. Dick rode carelessly on the towpath with shouts of unwonted vehemence and occasional quick glances at his watch. Rowing men lounging on their barges stood up lazily and shaded their eyes to watch. Girls in punts, bidden by their pilots, turned ignorant heads for a moment and fell back on their cushions.

'Now then, come along!' said Dick incisively. The cox counted the strokes, and the ungainly crew swung faster back.

'E-easy all!' cried Dick. He looked at his watch. '6.57. That's good enough for me,' he said half aloud. 'Well rowed, you men; very decent course,' and he passed away into technicalities.

On the first afternoon of the races Dick Ellesmere paddled up to the barge in a small Canadian canoe laden with many cushions. He looked up at the ladies on the top of the barge with one quick glance, and then vanished to change.

The eight paddled down to the start, shoving off amid an encouraging din from its own and critical looks from other barges.

Dick stepped into the punt looking after them.

'Oh, there is Mr. Ellesmere,' said Mrs. Farnham. The girl by her side looked and was silent.

A little crowd of men in shorts gathered about the punt at the start. The boat was already shoved out, and the cox lay back in his seat holding the bung at the full stretch of his left arm. All down the river the only sound was the counting of seconds, and the men who were to row sat rigid with agonised faces.

'Four, three, two, one,' said Dick. The gun roared. 'Come along now!'

He sprang to the bank and began to run as the oars tore through the water.

A confused roar from the struggling, pushing crowd ran down the bank. Dick ran straight, letting his weight carry him through.

'Long, long, long,' he shouted, and his followers took up the cry obediently. They passed Weir's Bridge no nearer to the boat in front. Then slowly—so slowly that only Dick saw it at first—the boat in front began to come back to them.

'Come along!' shouted Dick.

Very slowly his boat gained. The bow oars felt the wash, and the boat began to rock in the tiny waves. From the bank rattles

were let loose. The two boats closed in for the corner, and Dick's was inside.

'Ten strokes, cox,' he shouted.

The strain of the rudder was off, and the cox counted shrilly as the oars went into the water. There was only a few feet of water now between bow and stern. Two pistol shots cracked ominously from the towpath. The front boat closed in to the Berkshire bank for the next corner. From the drive of one stroke the bow of its chaser touched the stern lightly; at the next the stern was hit hard. Its cox put up his hand, and Dick and his followers gave the breath they had to shouting.

'Well rowed, you men—well rowed!' cried Dick. He turned to a friend on the bank: 'That's good enough. What? Means six places. What?' He shouted applause to the boat again and turned to run up.

'Got 'em Freewater Stone, Tom,' he said, as he was punted back to the barge. 'If we can get them there, don't see what's to stop us.' And Tom was jubilant.

The minutes were few between the time that a dirty, sweaty, half-naked Dick vanished into the dressing-room and the moment that saw a bulky figure clad in white trousers and a Leander jacket emerge, one leg at a time, by the dressing-room window. As in the old days, Dick could dress quickly.

'Good afternoon, Mrs. Farnham.'

Dick stood, lifting his hat and looking at the back of the girl who sat on his knee eight years ago. Her pale-green dress struck his memory; a thrill ran over his big impassive body as he stood there waiting.

'Good afternoon, Mr. Ellesmere. May we congratulate you? I believe you knew Dolly.'

Dolly turned in her chair. Her pale face, her big grey eyes, looked up at Dick. She met his eyes very frankly.

'I remember you very well, Mr. Ellesmere,' she said softly, and smiled as she held out her hand. Dick's big brown hand closed over it for a moment.

'Yes, I've remembered too,' said Dick quietly.

'And we have other things to congratulate you on, too,' said Mrs. Farnham. 'I see you are quite famous, Mr. Ellesmere. I've read the book. I liked it very much.'

'Oh, thank you,' said Dick; 'I had a throw, you know, and——' He spoke carelessly, looking at Dolly. Dolly met his eyes; she did not say anything.

“I—threw Venus!”’ quoted Caversham from behind, as Dick paused. ‘Yes, Dick, I believe you seduced Mrs. Farnham from the engaging society of Tolstoi for two days.’

‘It is a pious superstition of Mr. Caversham’s that I admire Tolstoi,’ Mrs. Farnham remarked. Dick made no answer; there were many things he wanted to say, but there was no room for them on the crowded top of the barge.

‘You read *Resurrection*,’ said Caversham; ‘the perseverance that does that must belong to an admirer or a proof-reader. So you made your bump easily, Dick?’

‘Quite a soft thing. We’ll be in the First Division to-morrow.’

‘I was so surprised to hear you were coaching,’ said Mrs. Farnham; and Caversham smiled. ‘Isn’t it rather tiresome?’

‘Not when the crew comes on well,’ said Dick, and he moved away to get them tea.

‘Do you think he has altered?’ said Caversham to Mrs. Farnham; but he looked at her daughter.

‘He seems to have found power,’ said Mrs. Farnham thoughtfully. Caversham nodded.

‘I remember him just like this,’ said Dolly.

Dick dispensed tea. Mrs. Farnham noted that he was still a man of few words. She was not sorry; she preferred that men should be unlike herself; also, she had liked Dick in the old days and she was not anxious to find too many changes.

‘Would you like to come down and see the start, Miss Farnham?’ said Dick at last. ‘I’ve a canoe at the barge.’

Dolly caught her breath.

‘I—I should like to very much,’ she said, and a flush stole into her cheeks. Dick looked half-heartedly at Mrs. Farnham: he was not anxious to do what appeared to be his duty. She laughed and shook her head.

‘No, thank you, Mr. Ellesmere. But pray take Dolly if she cares to go.’

Dolly went down the steps, and Dick, dropping over the back of the barge, brought his canoe round to the front. He laid out a mountain of cushions, and took off his coat. In a moment they were gliding down stream quickly, twisting hither and thither in the crowd of boats. And Tom the boatman, a man of experience, looking after them, observed that of all the blundering punts on the river not one was able to scrape Dick Ellesmere’s canoe.

‘Nor ’e didn’t use to trouble about them things,’ he grunted himself.

Mrs. Farnham and Caversham walked up and down in the meadow.

'I suppose you have read his book, Mr. Caversham?' said Mrs. Farnham carelessly, bowing to a distant dean.

'Yes.'

'I always enjoy reading the books of people I know.'

'One may criticise them without that penance,' said Caversham sleepily.

'I like to find real people in them.'

Caversham woke up: 'Real people have the knack of being dull.'

'Did you find any real people in Mr. Ellesmere's book?' asked Mrs. Farnham, tilting her sunshade.

'I did not even look for them,' said Caversham.

'You did not find that necessary?' said Mrs. Farnham quietly.

'I do not like photographs; naturally I never look for them.'

You think it was as close as that?'

'What is "it"?' said Caversham sharply. They looked at each other and Mrs. Farnham laughed.

'I give you the game,' she said. 'But it is more than a game after all.'

'Yes; I saw the likeness,' said Caversham slowly. 'Did your daughter?'

'There is nothing that she has said,' said Mrs. Farnham. She paused and laughed. 'And someone told me Mr. Ellesmere could never have seen a woman.'

'There are many of us who have not; and some women,' said Caversham—'one would be sorry for them if there were more time.'

And they went back to the barge.

The canoe passed on down stream, and Dick, steering carefully through what would have been an audience, said little.

'I was glad we made a bump,' said Dolly.

'I remember you clapping when we went head of the river eight years ago.'

Dolly laughed.

'We have gone down almost always since. It's not nearly so nice.'

'Yes, I'm glad,' said Dick. They went into the Oxfordshire bank, and lay up under a willow. In a moment or two the minute gun went.

They look bad, don't they, poor beggars?'

'Did you ever feel like that?' said Dolly.

'No, I was always a stolid, lumpy creature.'

Dolly looked up at him. 'You hadn't any emotions?'

'Well, I didn't keep 'em on top.'

Dolly nodded wisely. The boats were off; for two or three strenuous minutes of shouting and splashing the canoe watched them.

'It must be jolly,' said the girl, lying back on her cushions.

Dick laughed; it was a spirit after the manner of his own. He had never rowed so well in his hardest race. He looked at Dolly lying there before him, saw her big grey eyes meet his in the old honest way, saw her little bow mouth smile at his steady gaze; and the power that had led him for eight years took up the reins.

'Would you like to go on a little?' said Dick. Dolly drew out a tiny watch. 'Oh, it's only six,' said Dick quickly and rather breathlessly.

'If you would like,' said Dolly, and smiled at him. He paddled very quickly to the lock and hauled the canoe over the rollers speedily. Here was silence, and what by comparison was solitude.

'I haven't been up for eight years,' said Dick.

Dolly, trailing her fingers in the water and watching the ripple, said quietly: 'Why?'

'I was working.'

'Always?'

'I think it was always. I've been all about the world you know, and I've written a good many small things.'

'Yes, I know,' said Dolly quickly. 'But why didn't you come to Oxford sometimes?' She looked up, and as the sunlight fell on her face Dick saw there was colour in her pale cheeks. And her eyes were very bright.

'I wanted to do something first.'

Dolly smiled, and Dick did not know why. 'And the book was a big something,' said Dolly after a pause.

'Have you read it?' said Dick quickly.

'Of course,' said Dolly; and neither thought that unnatural. They paddled on in silence, till Dick gathered courage and said in a low voice:

'Did you see?'

Dolly looked up; their eyes met, and the boat drifted its own way. Their breath was coming fast. On Dolly's breast a little coral snake rose and fell quickly.

'Nancy was I,' said Dolly, and flushed.

Dick sighed heavily, took up his paddle, and swept the canoe round a side stream.

'Yes, I meant that. I'd always meant to do that,' said Dick quickly. 'I tried—hard.'

Dolly looked at the water. 'But you hadn't seen me—how did you know?'

'I had,' said Dick, 'yes, I had,' as she looked up startled. 'You've come often in the years. I saw you, and—and I knew.'

Dolly did not look up; her hands, lying idly on the side of the boat, trembled. 'You came, too, you know,' she said.

Dick drew in his breath. He looked quickly round him, gave a great stroke, and shot the boat heavily aground on a shallow by the bank. He knelt in the boat, and, leaning forward, took her hand.

'I knew you'd understand. It's eight years, Dolly, and you haven't gone away. I've tried, dear, all the time—and it was always you. I've tried, and I'm not much—but will you stay always, dear?'

Dolly looked up, and looked into his eyes; her lip trembled, her eyes were heavy with tears; and as she looked she swayed forward into his arms. 'Dick, Dick,' she sobbed, and she clung to him.

They came back in the twilight.

H. C. BAILEY.



## *Gilbert White.*

THE interest in Gilbert White, and in all that concerns the parochial and natural history of Selborne, continues unabated. New editions of the 'History' are constantly appearing; and now a life of the naturalist, in two large volumes, by his great-grand-nephew, has been published.<sup>1</sup> The book will be eagerly read by all lovers of Selborne. A large mass of correspondence, never before published, has been brought together; and many interesting details with regard to the daily life of the great naturalist are now for the first time given to the world.

It is well known that Gilbert White remained all his life a bachelor; and it has been asserted by some of his biographers—including the late Professor Bell of Selborne—that this was due to an unrequited attachment from which the naturalist never recovered. The lady in question is said to have been Hester Mulso, who afterwards became Mrs. Chapone, the sister of his life-long friend John Mulso, the Rector of Meonstoke and Canon of Winchester. This story, Mr. Holt-White is at pains to show, has absolutely no foundation, and it must be admitted that the series of letters from Mulso to White, now for the first time published, gives no encouragement to the idea; 'nor,' adds his latest biographer, 'is any tradition of the disappointed affections known among the family of the naturalist, who had but one mistress—Selborne.'

But though White remained a bachelor, he seems to have been a man of unusually affectionate disposition. His relations with the members of his family were of the most cordial nature; and one or another of his numerous nephews and nieces was generally on a visit to Selborne. Indeed, he appears to have been seldom

<sup>1</sup> *The Life of Gilbert White, of Selborne, author of the Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne.* Based on letters, journals, and other documents in the possession of the family, and not hitherto published. By his great-grand-nephew, Rashleigh Holt-White. With numerous photogravure portraits and other illustrations from family pictures, etc. 2 vols., demy 8vo, 32s. (Murray.)

alone. Nephews 'Jack,' or Sam Barker, to whom he writes many letters on natural history, come to stay with him, or 'Niece Molly,' for whom he has a special affection. One winter 'brother and sister John' live with him; and after 'brother John's' death the widow came to Selborne and resided with her brother-in-law during the rest of his life. When 'Nephew Jack' marries, he sets off with his bride for Selborne immediately after the ceremony. Gilbert is much pleased with his new relation: 'she is a nice needlewoman,' he says, 'and also a proficient in music, and can *shoulder a violin*, and in her carriage much of a gentlewoman.' Other friends too occasionally visit our naturalist. John Mulso and his wife, 'a very inactive lady,' sometimes braved the journey from Meonstoke, some sixteen miles distant, and would stay a fortnight. Or Dr. Richard Chandler, the celebrated Greek traveller, would come, and the two lovers of antiquity would examine together the ancient documents relative to Selborne Priory. Another intimate friend was the Rev. Ralph Churton, a Fellow of Brasenose, who seems to have usually spent Christmas at Selborne. White was also on terms of the closest friendship with his clerical neighbours at the Vicarage and at Newton Valence; and great was his distress when within eleven months both Mr. Etty and Mr. Yalden died.

Though College livings now and again fell to his share, White could never reconcile himself to the thought of leaving Selborne. Once, indeed, when the provostship of Oriel was vacant, he became a candidate for the post, but failed to be elected. After this disappointment he seems to have finally decided to remain at Selborne; though, as his friend Mulso's letters reveal, there was occasionally a flutter of excitement when some valuable piece of College preferment fell vacant. However, at Selborne he remained, retaining his Fellowship and also the College living of Moreton Pinkney, in Northamptonshire, which, after the manner of the age, was served by a curate; while White himself took clerical duty in the vicinity of his own home, first in the neighbouring village of Farrington, which he served for twenty-five years, and afterwards in his own parish of Selborne. The monotonous routine of duty was regularly varied by visits to his relatives in Sussex, Rutlandshire, and London, and by his annual visit to Oxford. These journeys were mostly undertaken on horseback—his friend Mulso calls him a 'hussar-parson'—as it appears White suffered much from what was called 'stage-coach sickness.'

Many are the details of domestic economy that we gather from the naturalist's letters, especially from those to his 'dear niece

Molly,' only daughter of brother Thomas, of South Lambeth. He is constantly asking her to do little commissions for him in London—a pound of coffee, half a pound of soft sealing-wax, two or three quires of small writing-paper, or a 'pound of Mr. Todd's 14s. green tea.' Or he asks her to purchase him 'a good large ham,' and to send it down by coach. The journey to Selborne was not always accomplished without danger. 'My ham,' writes Gilbert White, 'came safe, but had a great escape; for in its passage down the waggon was robbed of about 30*l.* in value.' Again and again he writes to Molly for 'half an hundred of good salt fish,' or 'five good Iceland codfishes,' to be sent down by carrier. On one occasion a great calamity occurred. 'We thank you,' he writes, 'for the salt fish, which proves more white and delicate than usual. Instead of in a parcel, the cod came down in a barrel, which, being leaky, let the brine out on the kitchen floor. I therefore told Thomas he should carry it into the cellar. Thomas, without much thought, took the barrel by the hoops and got to the cellar stairs, when off came the hoops, down fell the barrel, out flew the head; in short, the stairs from top to bottom became one broken wet scene of barrel-staves and codfish.' Other household matters sometimes occupy the attention of our naturalist. He is busy making catchup from the mushrooms gathered in the park below the Hanger; or he is superintending the brewing of his strong beer, or bottling 'out some very fine raisin wine,' or 'half an hogshead of Mrs. Atherley's port,' which had, he notices, 'not quite so good a smell and flavour as usual, and seemed always to show a disposition to mantle in the glass.' His garden is a source of constant pleasure to him. He writes to Molly about his cucumbers, asparagus, the prospect of his wall-fruit, or the fine show his tulips are making. We catch a glimpse of Goody Hampton, 'the weeding-woman,' whose services White proposes to retain for the summer 'that the garden may be neat and tidy' when Molly comes. 'This is the person,' he adds, 'that Thomas says he likes as well as a man; and, indeed, excepting that she wears petticoats and now and then has a child, you would think her a man!' Various improvements are from time to time carried out on the premises. He is engaged in making the Ha-ha wall, 'built of blue rags,' in the garden, which may still be seen; or in erecting his sundial, also remaining, the column of which, he notes, is 'very old, and came from Sarson House, near Amport, and was hewn from the quarries of Chilmarke.' The building of the 'great parlour' engaged his

attention one summer, and seems to have been a great event in the monotonous life of our naturalist.

It has often been regretted that no portrait of Gilbert White remains. Though urged by his brother Thomas to sit for his likeness, it does not appear that any picture was ever made of him. He is said by his biographer to have been only five feet three inches in stature and slender in person, but at the same time to have possessed a very upright carriage and a presence not without dignity. It is also stated that he was kind and courteous in manner, and liberal to his poorer neighbours; while he is said to have been specially devoted to his sick parishioners. This last particular is fully borne out by the numberless allusions in his letters to the sick and aged folk under his care at Selborne. His own health appears to have been generally good, though now and again we hear of attacks of sickness, and for many years before his death he was troubled with deafness, which rendered conversation irksome, and which apparently caused him to resort to an ear-trumpet, which was found among his effects at his decease. In one of his letters we find him alluding to an infirmity which we should hardly have associated with the writer of the *Naturalists' Journal*. 'You, in your mild way,' he writes to Robert Marsham, 'complain a little of procrastination; but I, who have suffered all my life long by that evil power, call her the Dæmon of Procrastination; and wish that Fuseli, the grotesque painter in London, who excels in drawing witches, dæmons, incubus's, and incantations, was employed in delineating this ugly hag, which fascinates in some measure the most determined and resolute of men.'

In White's letters to members of his family we occasionally get glimpses of village life as it appeared in the old-world days of the eighteenth century. There were no good roads to Selborne, and during the winter months the village was almost inaccessible except on foot or horseback. Under date of March 15, 1756, it is noted in *The Garden Kalendar* as an event worth chronicling: 'Brought a four-wheel'd post chaise to ye door at this early time of year.' John Mulso, when he visited his friend at Selborne, regularly asked for a guide to meet him 'at the cross-roads,' remarking that the village was as difficult of access as Rosamond's Bower. One winter a little diversion was created by the quartering in the village of the '26 High-landers.' 'These sans-breeches men,' says White, 'made an odd appearance in the village, where though they had nothing in the world to do, have yet behaved in a very quiet and inoffensive manner, and were never known to

steal even a turnip or a cabbage, though they lived much on vegetables, and were astonished at the "dearness of Southern provisions." The honesty of the soldiers seems to have been the more notable in contrast with the doings of some of the Selborne labourers. It appears from one of White's letters to Molly, that, in consequence of a bad harvest, 'the poor took to stealing the farmers' corn by night; the losers offered rewards, but in vain.' The poor people were beyond question very badly off: a few of the labourers, it appears from the 'letters,' kept pigs, and in years when beech-mast was abundant did fairly well; but, generally speaking, great poverty prevailed. They tried, many of them, to make a few shillings by keeping bees. 'This day,' notes Gilbert White, 'has been at Selborne the honey-market: for a person from Chert came over with a cart, to whom all the villagers round brought their hives, and sold their contents. Combs were sold last year at about  $3\frac{1}{2}d.$  per pound; this year  $3\frac{1}{2}d.-4d.$ ' In addition to the general poverty there was little enough to break the monotony of daily life. Once, indeed, we read of a cricket-match, in which 'Mr. Woods had his knee-pan dislocated by the stroke of a ball; and at the same time Mr. Webb was knocked down and his face and leg much wounded by the stroke of a ball.' Or a mad dog from Newton great farm causes intense alarm by biting half the dogs in the street and many about the neighbourhood. In consequence of this, '17 persons from Newton farm went in a waggon to be dipped in the sea, and also an horse.' Or a strange wedding sets all the village for two days in an uproar; when 'a young mad-headed farmer out of Berks came to marry farmer Bridger's daughter, and brought with him four drunken companions.' But 'the common people all agree that the bridegroom was the most of a gentleman of any man they ever saw.' Whether the labourers were accustomed to attend their parish church in those days we cannot discover from White's letters, but they were not in the habit of going to chapel. 'For more than a century past,' writes our parson-naturalist in the year 1788, 'there does not appear to have been one Papist in Selborne, or any Protestant dissenter of any denomination.' And as there were no chapels, so neither were there any recognised schools. 'Selborne,' he adds, 'is not able to maintain a schoolmaster; here are only two or three dames, who pick up a small pittance by teaching little children to read, knit, and sew.' What a change has passed over the conditions of village life since those words were written!

JOHN VAUGHAN.

## *Some Eighteenth-Century Children's Books.<sup>1</sup>*

'I should like,' said Mrs. Reynolds, 'to have seen Pope talk with Patty Blount; and I *have* seen Goldsmith.' Everyone turned to look round at Mrs. Reynolds, as if by so doing they could get a sight at Goldsmith.—HAZLITT.

**E**VEN as a ribbon, a pair of spectacles, an old shoe, will suddenly and minutely bring before us a mental picture of someone passed into the infinite and half-forgotten years before, so old books—above all old children's books—can by their very artlessness and simplicity vitalise for us the dry bones of a long past time, bidding it live and delight us by its very difference from the life and times we know.

To handle one of these frail little books is like using a telephone that bridges all the years between, and we seem to hear the clear music of child voices calling to one another across the silence in that English which, if more plain-spoken and less complex than our own, is so much purer.

Having had occasion quite lately to get together certain statistics as to what children are reading in this, the first year of the twentieth century, the opportunity of myself reading a large collection of children's books—once the property of a little girl in the eighteenth, now of her grandchild and great-grandchildren—was of peculiar interest. Nearly all these books—and there are over fifty of them—belong to the 'Gilt Book' series published by 'John and F. Newbery, of the Bible and Sun, St. Paul's Churchyard,' 'John Marshall, No. 4 Aldermary Churchyard, Bow Lane,' and some few by 'R. Baldwin, at The Rose, in Paternoster Row.' John Newbery is described by the Vicar of Wakefield as 'the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, who has written so

<sup>1</sup> The collection of 'Gilt Books' referred to is in the possession of T. J. F. Haskoll, Esq., of Brandon House, Cheltenham, and his family; the thanks of the writer are due to him not only for permission to quote from the books themselves, but also from his own notes concerning them.



many little books for children; he called himself their friend, but he was the friend of all mankind.'

Poor Goldsmith had reason to sing the praises of the honest publisher, who no doubt helped him over many a hard place. It was his nephew, however, Francis Newbery, who bought the MS. of *The Vicar of Wakefield* for 60*l.*, and kept it back two years before he published it.

Such modest, unassuming little books they are, these 'Gilt Books'! The largest of them not more than five inches by four; the smallest, some two by one and a half. All of them bound in that 'Dutch flowered and gilt paper, the secret of whose manufacture,' so the *Dictionary of National Biography* tells us, 'is unfortunately lost.' Right good and serviceable binding it has been, for out of some fifty little books of the kind—nearly all of them published between 1745 and the end of the century—only two had any loose pages. Perhaps their original owner was of a more careful turn than are children nowadays; in most of them she has written her name 'Lydia Heaton, her book' (being herself, by the way, a direct descendant of the Bishop Heaton who, in Elizabeth's reign, had the temerity to defy that autocratic sovereign), and the date, generally 1770, in a round, unformed, childish hand. In some of them she adds reflections under her name, as in the front page of *Mr. Winlove's Moral Lectures*:—

'Tis education forms the minde,  
Just as a twig is bent the tree's inclined.

She is not always improving, however; in another she waxes political, and underneath 'Lydia Heaton, her book' writes in bold characters, 'Wilks for ever!'

In the preface to the said *Moral Lectures*, Mr. Winlove disarms criticism by proclaiming that 'works of this kind are not calculated to procure fame; but if they appear to be well meant they may at least hope for pardon.' He is certainly vastly well meant, for he proceeds to lecture on no fewer than twenty-eight subjects, such as 'pride, industry, wisdom, education, modesty,' and so forth. On the subject of pride he is very forcible. 'It is,' he says, 'one of the great evils of the capriciousness of fortune in this world that "the learned pate often ducks to the golden fool"; but let not the wealthy idiot presume too much on his empty superiority, since any reproach or neglect thrown on the man of learning and genius will probably be returned him tenfold; his



very name will be ridiculous and himself transmitted as a block-head and a coxcomb down to the latest posterity.'

Possibly some 'wealthy idiot' had dared to patronise Mr. Winlove and thus caused him to be so bitter? But perhaps more interesting even than Mr. Winlove's lucubrations are such pages at the end as are devoted to 'a catalogue of pretty little books for children sold by F. Newbery at the corner of St. Paul's Church-yard,' among others: *Pretty Poems for Children Three Feet High*; *Pretty Poems for Children Six Feet High*; *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*; *The History of Pamela*; *The History of Joseph Andrews*; and *The History of Clarissa Harlowe*, each of them 'abridged for the amusement of youth, adorned with copper-plate cuts, 1s.' These are by no means abridged precisely in the directions one would expect, seeing that they are specially designed for the amusement of youth, and it is certain that Lydia Heaton and her contemporaries in no way shared the fate of Miss Podsnap while their 'old friend Mr. Newbery' at the sign of the 'Bible and Sun' prepared such strong meat for their delectation.

But it is not only little books for children that good Mr. Newbery sells, here also may be had 'The Original Daffy's Elixir,' beloved by grandmamas in Thackeray; 'Dr. James's Herbal Powders,' said to have caused the death of Goldsmith; and twenty other nostrums calculated to cure every ill that flesh is heir to. Indeed, one favourite and much advertised 'skin cure' nowadays is, I believe, sold by the descendants of that very John Newbery, though the original publishing business was succeeded to by Messrs. Griffith & Farran, in 1865.

Any one of these 'abridged' versions is a marvellous shillings-worth; but, indeed, they all, even the penny and twopenny numbers—erroneously called 'chap-books'—compare favourably with our cheap books in matter of paper, binding, and printing, and almost every one is adorned with what Mr. Henley calls 'small, square, agitating cuts.' Whereby we discover that quite young 'misses' wore their hair over a cushion, making their heads to seem out of all proportion to their bodies, while young masters in skirted coats, knee breeches, and long waistcoats with flaps, look like grandpapas. Certainly in the matter of illustrations we have made enormous strides, for the artists illustrating these stories for the most part make no attempt to depict children, or, for the matter of that, grown-up people, like any human creature that ever walked or ran upon the earth. For the most

part these 'cuts' are very small and very ugly, but the writers seem proud enough of them, for underneath one diminutive drawing of a male being that might be any age, we find triumphantly inscribed: 'Here he is, there is much sweetness in his looks.' We have to take the sweetness on trust, for his features consist of four dots in a round white space about the size of a groat.

It is a far cry from *Little Lord Fauntleroy* or *The Book of Friendly Beasts* to such books as *Mrs. Lovechild's Golden Present* and *The First Principles of Religion and the Existence of a Deity Explained in a Series of Dialogues Adapted to the Capacity of the Infant Mind*. The particular infant selected for enlightenment is one Maria, and an admirably human and delightful infant she proves to be. Of course her mamma is one of those ladies—they appear in every story of that time destined for children—of a truly awful (I use the word in its most serious significance) omniscience. Such mothers and fathers make their stately march through the various contingencies created for them by their authors with unfailing calmness, wisdom, and rectitude. It is impossible to conceive of such perfect beings afflicted by any trifling ailment or annoyance as, say, a cold in the head, though we are told that Maria's father was ordered by his physician to take a certain powder for some slight disorder. This, however, occurs so frequently in the stories that it would seem good Mr. Newbery was no more averse to advertisement than we are in our day, and lost no opportunity of puffing his wares.

But to return to Maria, she is made after no formal pattern. From time to time throughout the dialogues her nimble mind would seem to be subdued to walking pace by her mother's ponderous aphorisms, as when that lady indulges in a somewhat lengthy dissertation as to the true inwardness of taking God's name in vain, which we feel can have been in no way beneficial to Maria as illustrating how it is done; but no, she shakes back her rebellious curls from her face (there are no illustrations to spoil our conception of Maria), and with the expression of an anxiously inquiring seraph demands demurely, 'But would it not be civiler and prettier to say either Mr. or Mrs., and not plain God?'

Again, as an example of the evils of 'slyness,' her mother tells a story concerning the two Misses Quick. Each had a pincushion of much the same make; but Miss Betty's was larger than Miss Sally's, and Miss Sally by a subterfuge manages to exchange her own for her sister's. At the conclusion of this moral history

Maria remarks meditatively : ' Do you think, then, it signifies to God which of the Miss Quicks had the largest pincushion ? '

If, however, the good parents seem preternaturally wise, and the well-brought-up children behave as no children ever did behave either then or now, there is no lack of injudicious parents and spoilt children in the stories. For instance, in *The Histories of more Children than One, or Goodness better than Beauty*, Master John and Miss Mary Strictum, who are, as their names would imply, models of deportment, are favourably contrasted with Master Thomas and Miss Kitty Bloomer (why Bloomer ?) who, after they had both by crying prevailed upon their mother to let them have what they wanted, they began to wish for something else, and nothing would satisfy Thomas but having his papa's horse brought into the parlour for him to ride round the room. His mamma tried ' to persuade him not to want it, but he would have his own way, and so the servant was told to bring it in.' Thomas was much pleased to have it, but Kitty was afraid of it, and did not like it should stay. She therefore began to scream, and beg it might go out. " Pray take it out," said she ; " it shall go out ; it sha'n't stay ! " " It shall stay ; it sha'n't go out ! " said her brother. They made such a noise that they quite frightened the horse, and he began to kick and prance till he threw Master Thomas off, and cut his head against a corner of the table. He then kicked up his heels and broke a fine large looking-glass into a thousand pieces. After that he threw down a chair on which lay two of Miss Kitty's dolls, and treading upon them mashed them into atoms. After he had done all this mischief Mrs. Bloomer thought it time to send the horse away, notwithstanding Thomas cried, and said it should not go.' Not even the most indulgent parent of these degenerate days could go farther than this.

One thing forcibly strikes the humble student of Froebelian and other modern systems of education, and that is, how in all these stories, whether didactic or not, a task is a task. There is no attempt on the part of parents, pastors, or masters to prove that lessons are more enjoyable than play, or that great truths may be imparted by means of plastic rubber or strips of coloured paper. The young masters and misses of those sterner times were early made acquainted with the meaning of the word ' duty.' Those who obeyed her call cheerfully were rewarded ; those who disobeyed, or came grudgingly, met with so many misfortunes as to be awful warnings. And while on the subject of rewards, it may be

interesting to quote the kind of reward which crowns the efforts of the well-disposed: 'The History of Master Jackey and Miss Harriot, Who by their Good Behaviour became, from Tradesmen's children, the richest and happiest Pair in the County of Salop. Dedicated to the Good Children of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.'

The admirable deportment of Master Jackey and Miss Harriot is so noised abroad that it comes to the ears of the Marquis of Fairfame, who promptly sends for the two prodigies to visit him. They come, are seen, and conquer the Marquis and his lady so completely that these amiable scions of the nobility adopt them both, and leave them their property and titles when they die. There was evidently some laxity anent the law of entail in the county of Salop just then.

In the 'Whitsuntide Present, The History of Master and Miss Goodchild, price one penny Bound and Gild,' we have another instance of modest worth meeting with its deserts. A certain Dame Wishwell speaks so warmly of their walk and conversation to her noble friends the Duke and Duchess of Goodmanners, that their graces are consumed with anxiety to behold these paragons, and send a coach and six, with coachman and footmen and everything handsome about it, to fetch Master and Miss Goodchild to spend the day at their ancestral seat. Here the fortunate infants are introduced to her grace's son, the Marquis of Well-Behave, and her grace's daughter Lady Maria Dutiful, where we may leave them, for their after-adventures were not exciting.

For Master Jackey and Miss Harriot things were made lively by a young gentleman rejoicing in the name of 'Trapfingered Tommy,' a sobriquet which he had earned when, in an endeavour to steal some preserved 'plumbs,' his fingers were caught in a rat-trap. One can give no idea of the impressiveness of these narratives unless one adopts a similar mode of printing. Every proper name is in italics, and every noun has a capital and shouts at you from the printed page.

By means of the *Polite Academy* we get an insight into the sort of manners expected from the well-bred in 1765. It is miles removed in point of diction and conception from the miserable 'Etiquette Books' of our time; and here the illustrations, mainly of deportment, are much better. Neither does the compiler of the manual lack subtlety in some of his definitions, as, for instance, that of good breeding. 'Good Breeding, like charity, not only covers a multitude of faults, but, to a certain degree, supplies the

want of some virtues. In the common intercourse of life it acts Goodnature, and often does what Goodnature will not always do.' Then—and how strangely prophetic of similar strictures in our own day!—'I observe with concern that it is the fashion for youth of both sexes to brand good breeding with the name of Ceremony and Formality: as such they ridicule and explode it: and adopt in its stead, an offensive carelessness and inattention, to the diminution I will venture to say, even of their own pleasures, if they know what true pleasures are.'

The *Polite Academy* does not confine itself to purely ethical considerations; the minutest directions are given as to polite behaviour under all sorts of circumstances:—

'Take salt with a salt-spoon or else with a clean knife—not with that you are eating with, for that will foul the rest.

'Do not laugh at table; much less sneeze, cough, or yawn; but if you cannot avoid it, hold up the napkin or table-cloth before your face, and turn aside from the table.

'When you drink, bow to some one of the company and say Sir, or Madam.

'Never regard what another has on his plate; it looks as if you wanted it.

'If you have occasion to laugh, turn from the company.

'Always look pleased, but not merry unless there is Occasion.'

Now as to the deportment of a young Master:—

'Let your Feet be placed at a small distance from one another, not too close, nor too wide in spreading.

'Put one Hand easy and free into the Bosom of your Waistcoat, and the other under the Flap of it.

'Do not button more than the three lowest Buttons of your Waistcoat that your Hand may not be raised too high.

'Do not thrust your Hand into your Breeches as vulgar boys do, but let it fall with Ease under the Flap of your Waistcoat.'

To face this page there is a beautiful 'copper cut' of a young Master in the easy and elegant attitude recommended, and truly 'there is a great deal of sweetness in his looks.'

This delightful volume was published by R. Baldwin at 'The Rose in Paternoster Row, and B. Collins in Salisbury 1765.'

Another that should assuredly be reprinted, if it has the effect its author claims for it, is 'The Valentine's Gift, or a Plan to make Children of all Sizes and Denominations to behave with Honour, Integrity, and Humanity, Very Necessary in a Trading Nation.' In this there is less direct preachment and lots of

stories, many of them from the classics, told with delightful *naïveté*, while the 'cuts' are of a more agitating and elaborate quality than usual.

Curiously enlightening glimpses do these little books afford of the manners and opinions of the time. For instance, in the *Adventures of a Pincushion*, we learn that a young woman who stole two silver spoons from the table of a friend was prosecuted by that friend, and finally 'transported for life.' In the same story a Miss Sally Flaunt, an idle gadabout, ever dissatisfied with her homely dress and surroundings, exclaims angrily, 'Do you call this Dowlass, this coarse apron, this linsey-woolsey gown, *good things*?' when her virtuous and contented cousin, Miss Hannah Mindful, points out to her her mercies—Miss Hannah Mindful herself being neatly and suitably attired in 'a light brown stuff'—doubtless the despised linsey-woolsey—'white apron and handkerchief, and a straw hat with green ribbons.'

In *The Perambulations of a Mouse* a long story is told by one John, a coachman, who, anent some stuck-up and churlish miss, remarks, 'If a child of mine was to behave in that surly manner, I would whip it to death almost. I abominate such unkind doings. Let everyone, I say, do as they would be done by. . . . But there, ladies, I have finished my story, and let me tell you so long preaching has made my throat dry, so another mug of ale if you please, Master Bobby; for faith, talking at the rate I have done is enough to wear a man's lungs out.' Everybody refreshed himself with jolly mugs of ale in those days, nor dreaded any arsenic in the cup.

There is atmosphere in the very titles of the tales; the stately periods would seem to curtsy to us as we read, for instance, 'The Twelfth Day Gift, or the Grand Exhibition, containing a curious Collection of Pieces in Prose and Verse (many of them original) which were delivered to a numerous and polite Audience, on the Subjects of Religion, Morality, History, Polity, Prudence, and Oeconomy, at the most noble the Marquis of Setstar's, by a Society of young Gentlemen and Ladies, and registered at their Request by their old Friend Mr. Newbery. With which are intermixed some occasional Reflections, and a Narrative containing the Characters and Behaviour of the several Persons concerned.'

Example draws where Precept fails,  
And Sermons are less read than Tales.'

In *Holiday Pursuits*, a set of dialogues chiefly between a



father and son, we get some idea of how forward children were in matters educational, for the father asks :

‘ Dick, have you got ten lines of Ovid by heart ? ’

‘ Yes, papa, and I’ve wrote my exercise. ’

‘ Very well then, you shall ride with me. The boy that does a little at seven years old will do a great deal when he’s fourteen. ’

Moreover, quite young misses are described as repeating long extracts from Dryden’s works. Not that they lacked the good old fairy tales we know. They are all given in one or another of these little books, and most of our familiar nursery rhymes are contained in a tiny penny book called *Robin Goodfellow*. In *The Orphan, or the Entertaining History of Little Goodie Goosecap*, we hear that she went to ‘ Westminster Abbey, where they were shewn the waxwork and many fine monuments. ’ Perhaps from an antiquarian point of view, one of the most interesting of these booklets is a tiny two-inch, ‘ Cries of London as they are Exhibited in the Streets, with an Epigram in Verse adapted to Each, embellished with sixty-two elegant Cuts, ’ among them such unfamiliar cries as ‘ Jaw work, jaw work ! a whole pot for a halfpenny, hazle nuts ! ’ ‘ A pig and plumb sauce ! Who buys my pig and plumb sauce ? ’ ‘ Buy a mouse trap or a trap for your rats ! ’ ‘ My old soul, will you buy a bowl ? ’ ‘ Oysters, fine Wainfleet oysters ! ’

Altogether, one comes to the conclusion that eighteenth-century children were not so very much to be pitied in the matter of literature. To be sure they were ignorant of the ‘ large-paper copies ’ and wide margins so much affected in our own nursery books ; but then their ‘ little libraries ’ were so very much their own, and could be stowed away in such uncommonly small space. For instance, it is pleasant to think that perhaps Lydia Heaton kept hers in a certain cardboard box of the same period. It is covered with ‘ Dutch flowered and gilt paper, ’ and has a pincushion atop. If there were perhaps rather many manuals in the style of *The Careful Parent’s Gift*, *The Pious Child’s Delight*, or *Little Truths*—this last by Dr. Watts—was there not also *Tom Jones* ? and, for such as were of a scientific turn, *The Newtonian System of Philosophy* ?

It is probably no accident that these books were so small. It was considered disrespectful for a child to read in the presence of an elder ; and doubtless his good friend Mr. Newbery took this into consideration when he initiated his ‘ Lilliputian Library, ’



any portion of which could be carried in the very smallest pocket and enjoyed in solitary corners at odd minutes.

O blessed letters, that combine in one  
All ages past, and make one live with all :  
By you we do confer with who are gone,  
And the dead-living into counsel call :  
By you th' unborn shall have communion  
Of what we feel and what doth us befall.

L. ALLEN HARKER.

## *A Monk's Lament for Maeve.*

**N**OW is the High Queen vanquished, she has cast her sword  
aside,

And the stones are gray on Knocknarea  
That build up the cairn of her pride,  
And Maeve lies cold in her lonely grave on the haunted mountain  
side.

Stately, of earth-encrusted gold, Our Lady's shrine is built,  
Yet fairer by far is the gold of a star,  
Or a song with a golden lilt,  
Or the dream-gold of the dead Queen's hair and her dagger's carven  
hilt.

My sorrow grows and darkens as the bitter years increase ;  
I could have been brave to fight for Maeve,  
Now I pray that all war may cease,  
Now do I mourn for a Queen long dead and passed through the  
gates of peace.

I fear the folk who pass my door to market or to Mass ;  
Dearer to me are the waves of the sea  
Than the faces of those that pass ;  
Better I love the silver mob of daisies that toss in the grass.

I hate the sight of swords that flash in the noonday sun,  
I shrink with fear from the battle cheer,  
And the clatter of deeds that are done—  
My soul grows gray in the silence, like the silver soul of a nun.

The hood of darkness on my brows is folded down and pressed ;  
I care no more for peace or war,  
But I pray for a little rest,  
Where the golden soul of silence rises out of the west.

EVA GORE-BOOTH.

## *Airs and Graces.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'CONCERNING TEDDY.'

G-GOOD Lord!' said Teddy, 'and I th-thought you were a gentleman!'

Wilfred de Bohme Elles flicked the ash from his cigar—the cigar with which, ten minutes before, Teddy had provided him.

'Oh!' he said, 'I make few pretensions. The men I meet take me at their own valuation.'

'N-not a very high one I should think,' ventured Teddy.

The man in the arm-chair looked at him reflectively. 'That depends,' he said. 'You, at least, valued me as a "gentleman," and I expect the word "gentleman" signifies to your mind everything of the most desirable?'

He leaned back in his place, blowing a cloud of smoke towards the ceiling. Teddy threw the window open and thrust his head into the cool night air. He felt choked, stifling; like a stunned child who, suddenly and without provocation, has been slapped on the cheek by one whom it held in confidence and esteem. Any anticipation of ill-usage was utterly foreign to Teddy's sunny, optimistic nature; all the harder, then, this first lesson, tendered by a man for whose social qualities he had entertained a genuine, if boyish, enthusiasm. Even now, in spite of reiteration, he could hardly conceive Elles's threat a genuine one.

It was a lovely night; a great, clear moon rode in the sky. Below, the close-shaven lawns lay pool-like—dim and shadowy. Teddy jerked his shoulders into the room again. 'Then you really m-mean,' he said, 'that if I d-don't pay that two hundred before next week is over you'll t-tell my father and ask him for the money?'

'That's what I said,' responded Elles quietly.

'B-but it was a d-debt of honour, and I t-told you how my father hates gambling,' said Teddy, his stammer accentuated by

nervous perplexity. Even now he doubted the evidence of his senses. Fellows weren't blackguards, he argued, therefore Elles couldn't possibly mean what he said; some explanation must be forthcoming other than that so glaringly apparent.

Wilfred de Bohme Elles took the cigar from between his lips and examined it critically. 'My dear boy,' he said, 'you have mentioned your parent's little peculiarity more than once in my hearing; I am also aware there exists only one person upon earth for whom you entertain the smallest feeling of fear or of reserve. That person is your father, and upon his dislike for gambling I propose to trade. I want the money, and I mean to have it.'

Teddy's mind worked convulsively. He was so young as to be incredulous of misfortune before it fell upon him, yet not old enough to know that, somehow or other, our greatest perplexities solve themselves in the course of time. Two hundred pounds! He had already this year outrun the constable. Aubrey might be able to lend him a little ready money, but such a sum as this was beyond even his brother's generous resources. Teddy was unaccustomed to debt; he writhed in its degrading clutches.

'Is there no such Providence as a money-lender?' suggested Elles, breaking a protracted silence.

'No,' said Teddy, decisively. 'I'd rather be shot than tell the Governor I've been gambling; but even that would be b-better than b-borrowing from the Jews.'

He squared his shoulders against the window-frame and fell into calculation. The elder man got out of his chair and strolled round the room, watching him furtively yet with a keen curiosity. Presently he stopped before the mantel-shelf to examine the photographs grouped upon it. A dozen prominent cricketers and athletes, signed, for the most part, by the originals; an equal number of pretty girls in every diversity of fascinating costume, and, set apart from the rest, the portraits of two women, neither of them young, neither of them particularly beautiful, yet possessed of an individuality impossible to overlook. Each of these photographs, unlike the rest in the room, was mounted in a filigree-silver frame, while between them, from a slender Venetian vase, a couple of *La France* roses drooped their perfumed heads. The effect, almost shrine-like, afforded a smile to Teddy's creditor.

'If not the Jews, how about these foster-mothers?' he suggested, lightly touching one of the frames with a cigarette-stained finger. 'Their advice, as I understand from your confidences,

invariably proves excellent; why not test the quality of their coin? For *my* benefit, *bien entendu*?'

In a moment Teddy was standing over him. 'Take your dirty hands off that portrait,' he said, without the trace of a stammer. 'And here'—he strode to the doorway—'get out of this, and never show your face in my rooms again. If you do——'

He flung the door wide and waited, his young face set and dangerously quiet.

Elles glanced at him in amazement. 'Oh! come——' he began, shrugging his shoulders; but Teddy, in a flash, had awakened to the real nature of the man. He stood on the threshold, grimly determined.

De Bohme Elles took up his hat and sauntered leisurely across the room. 'As you please,' he said; 'you can make a quarrel about it, of course; but remember—I'll have that two hundred pounds next week from you or I'll get it from your father.'

'You can do your worst,' said Teddy. And he slammed the door behind him.

Four days later Teddy sat beside his brother in the Pavilion at Lord's. The weather was glorious, the match an important one. Teddy had yesterday acquitted himself with distinction in the field, and yet, though this was his first appearance in county cricket, he remained downcast and *distrain*.

'Nervous, old chap?' queried Aubrey, as the first wicket fell. He himself was conscious of a painful excitement—a sense of seasickness, as it were; but Teddy, as a rule, suffered no whit from lack of coolness or self-confidence. 'Oh! by the way—I clean forgot—here's a letter for you from the Governor. At the last moment he couldn't get away, though I sha'n't be surprised if he turns up during the afternoon.'

Teddy took the note and listlessly tore it open. 'I d-didn't expect him,' he said; 'the Governor doesn't really c-care about cricket, you know.'

'Oh, doesn't he!' said Aubrey, 'he cares more than you've any idea of. He's awfully keen on your making a good score to-day: keener than I remember him in all my life.'

'By Jove!' exclaimed Teddy, sitting up suddenly. Aubrey glanced inquiry, and his brother handed him the letter.

'DEAR EDWARD,—As it seems unlikely any other pursuit will obtain your undivided attention, I feel anxious that in

cricket, at least, you shall do yourself no dishonour. I am not particularly learned in "the game," but I understand that to procure a "century" is to immortalise not only your name, but, in this instance, mine also. Under these circumstances, I shall be happy to pay you the sum of two pounds (2*l.*) for every run you make in to-morrow's match. "Talent money," don't you call it?—Yours ever,

'T. W. D.'

'By Jove!' exclaimed Teddy again, and lapsed once more into silence.

'Why,' said Aubrey, after a pause for consideration, 'are you in such a hole as that, old fellow?'

'All that, and m-more beside,' answered his brother. 'There goes another wicket! My turn now; wish me luck, Aubrey, I'll tell you about it by-and-by.' He picked up his bat and walked down the steps of the Pavilion.

'Teddy's nervous,' commented Aubrey to himself. 'I hope to goodness his "by-and-by" may not prove immediately.'

'I'm thankful this isn't a bowler's day,' thought Teddy, as he took up his position at the wicket. 'With luck I may pull it off, but the odds are against me. If not——.' He stopped thinking and stood up to face the bowling.

There followed a lesson in responsibility such as Teddy, in his careless young life, had never experienced before. Not only was he upon trial in the eyes of his county—in the eyes of the world, as it appeared to him—but so much, so very much, more than mere fame depended upon his success in run-making. His father's esteem, Aubrey's belief in him, the trust of those silver-framed women in his sitting-room at the 'Varsity, nay, even the regard of his old playmate Caroline—brown-haired Caroline, who, since he was a mere lad, had remained his staunch friend and admirer—all these assets, and more, hung in the balance. For, during the last few days, the old boyish affections and desires had laid fresh hold upon Teddy. He was sick of the men in whose company it had been possible to encounter a De Bohme Elles, and he turned—as some time or other we all turn—towards the wholesome friendships and ideals of his boyhood.

Thank heaven, he had survived the first over! Now he found himself at the Pavilion end, facing the fast bowler. At what a pace the man tore to the crease! If he could only——. The quick tap of bat on leather, a burst of applause; Teddy had cut

the first ball for a four to the boundary. In his relief he slashed out at the next, and, for the moment, as it barely hummed beyond reach of long-slip's eager fingers, felt his heart flutter painfully in his throat; whereupon he steadied down, playing, or blocking, with care and precision, while the ball grew momentarily more and more distinct and comprehensible. Such a *little* ball at first, almost too small to realise as it left the bowler's hand; now so largely obvious it appeared to Teddy impossible he could misjudge either pace or line of flight.

And then, with that crookedness which characterises the affairs of mortals, the luncheon hour had arrived and Teddy, just as he found himself well set, was obliged to go in for the sake of a meal the very idea of which he resented. He left the wicket slowly, head erect, annoyance in his bearing. It was hard that his innings had begun so close upon two o'clock. Enough to spoil any man's eye! Of course when he came out again the light would have changed, and he——.

'Teddy is giving himself airs,' said a handsome, white-haired woman to the girl beside her. 'And graces,' she added, as, doffing his cap to her and her companion, he saluted another lady with equal brevity and disappeared into the Pavilion.

'Impossible!' defended Caroline. Yet, noting the dismay in Cousin Winnie's sweet face, her heart was hot within her and she found it difficult to coin excuses for their batsman's behaviour. Where Teddy was concerned, however, Caroline invariably maintained a painful loyalty. 'Perhaps he isn't well,' she hazarded, and at a sign from Winifred Meredith she joined her hurriedly.

The white-haired woman followed her with tender eyes. 'Winifred, if it can be done, will explain Teddy satisfactorily,' she said to the tall bronzed man beside her. 'Still, it hurts! I remember to this day how it hurts. She's a brave lassie; I should like to give Master Teddy a piece of my mind!'

'Don't,' said her husband, laughing; 'the poor lad would be out to a certainty. After all, you should make some allowance for a first appearance in county cricket.'

'Fudge!' said his wife. 'Airs and graces: lots of them; that's what's the matter with Master Teddy. He's not half the boy he used to be. Well——! Get me some sandwiches.'

Meantime Teddy hurried through his luncheon. 'Aubrey,' he said to his brother, whom he found inspecting the pitch, 'I want a talk with Miss Millicent. Is she alone, I wonder?'



'Only the Colonel with her a moment ago. Look here, Teddy, stop a minute, they're going——.'

'Oh, bother!' said Teddy, and turned on his heel impatiently. He strode, hot foot, across the grass to join his friend, while she, glancing aside at his approach, vouchsafed him a greeting casual enough. But Teddy, standing nervously in front of her, missed the note of disapproval in her voice.

'Miss Millicent,' he said, using, as he and Aubrey were privileged to do, the name by which in old days they had known her. 'Miss Millicent, I want to tell you something. I want—would the Colonel mind?—I want to speak to you alone.'

Miss Millicent's husband laughed. 'I've no choice but to retire in your favour,' he said. 'When play begins you'll find me in the Pavilion; meantime, I consider myself off duty for a spell.' He lifted his hat to his wife, and strolled away.

'Well,' said Miss Millicent, and waited, expectant.

Teddy, dropping into the vacant seat beside her, tried vainly to begin. He longed for absolution, yet hated the act of confession; after all, perhaps it was absurd to take the matter so seriously. If he could only make a century Elles might be paid off at once, and then——. Looking up he met the glance of his old friend's eyes—those piercing, grey eyes which, years ago, had struck terror to his heart when their owner discovered him rifling her strawberry beds. Early influences are strong upon us till we reach the thirties. Teddy, helped to a conclusion by those eyes so keen yet tender, stammered out his story on the wave of an irresistible impulse.

'It was when he l-laid his hands on Cousin Winnie's picture that I s-seemed to fathom the brute,' he concluded. 'And n-now, Miss Millicent, give me your blessing. If I can only win my t-talent money, it'll be all right.'

Miss Millicent laid her hand upon his arm. 'You'll win it, I hope and trust. But Teddy, consider. Things won't be quite "all right" till you've told your father.'

Teddy turned sharply, staring at her in dismay. 'T-tell the Governor?' he said, 'why, t-that's just what I want to avoid. Where's the g-good of a century if I have to explain it to him?'

'He's your father,' said Miss Millicent.

Teddy fidgetted in his place. His father! Of course; but how much in this case did the circumstance of fatherhood mean? All the years of his life Teddy had looked upon his father as a

man to be considered and obliged; respected certainly, feared more than a little, loved not at all. And now, of a sudden, this good friend suggested, by way of duty, a needless self-indictment before an assuredly unsympathetic judge.

'I c-cant tell the Governor,' said Teddy sullenly.

Miss Millicent took her hand away from his arm and answered nothing. They sat together in silence for a long minute; then Teddy's quick eye caught sight of De Bohme Elles coming across the grass. 'T-that's the man,' he said, under his breath, and pointed him out to his companion.

Miss Millicent, still in silence, watched him out of sight. 'My dear boy,' she said, 'you *must* tell your father. What sort of peace do you suppose a man like that will conclude even if you pay to the uttermost farthing? Why, "blackmail" is written all over his countenance.'

'Ah!' said Teddy, 'I hadn't thought of that.'

'Beside,' said his friend, 'you owe it to yourself to tell. Why not? In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred pluck pays in the long run, while even in the hundredth you retain at least your self-respect. Own up, Teddy, and give us more cause than ever to be proud of you.'

The bell rang; the umpires came out into the field. In another moment Teddy would have to take his place again at the wicket. Miss Millicent held her breath. He turned towards her, his eyes shining.

'And you *will* be p-proud of me,' he said; 'you and Cousin Winnie and C-Caroline? You'll not chalk up that g-gambling against me as the G-governor's sure to do?'

'Teddy,' said Miss Millicent, 'we'll love you better than we ever did before.'

Teddy got up quickly, holding out his hand. 'You're right,' he said, 'and I'll d-do it. Win or lose, I'll do it. Thanks for telling me.'

'And, Teddy,' called Miss Millicent after him, 'for goodness' sake don't miss your century!'

And Teddy did not miss his century. To the three women anxiously watching him, to Aubrey, to the Colonel, and to another interested spectator who, about four o'clock, appeared upon the ground, his careful treatment of the bowling brought small reassurance; for Teddy's cricket, like Teddy's self, was not as a rule of the careful sort.

'I don't understand it,' grumbled his father. 'The lad's not in his usual form at all.'

'Must be careful in a big match,' said the Colonel.

'Yes; but he's had ample time to get set by now. Stone-walling isn't his play; no good'll come of it, I assure you. There's a fourer thrown away! What on earth's the matter with the boy?'

Miss Millicent knew, but Miss Millicent did not tell. She *felt* the batsman's thoughts as they raced through his mind: the eagerness to make that century; the knowledge of how much braver would be a voluntary confession than one forced upon him of necessity. She clenched her hands together; every difficult ball gave her a moment's anguish; each change of bowling struck her speechless with anxiety.

Five o'clock. Several wickets had fallen, but Teddy still remained. He was grateful for a life in the field; he had to thank a lucky one which, by a miracle, escaped cover-point's upstretched arm. For the rest he played on doggedly, resolutely—until he reached sixty, and then, realising of a sudden how completely he had mastered the bowling, he changed his tactics and began to hit all round the wicket.

Miss Millicent leaned forward eagerly. 'Something was bothering him,' she whispered to Caroline. 'I was wrong about the "airs and graces." I'm sorry, dear.'

'I knew you were wrong,' said Caroline indignantly, clapping for a sensational drive into the Pavilion.

'Ah, well, I'll make my peace with Teddy. *You* can forgive me when you choose,' said Miss Millicent, smiling, as the board registered seventy-five. The babel of voices around them changed, deepening to a constant murmur like the murmur of waves on a pebbly shore; now extinguished in silence, now breaking into sudden, shrill spray of applause. Still Teddy's score leapt up and up, till at last—None of the three women could have spoken to save their lives, but, as the hundred was telegraphed, they turned to each other with one accord.

'Do you forgive me?' said Miss Millicent, twinkling, and Caroline, tears of delight in her eyes, smiled a glad assent.

Teddy met De Bohme Elles the following afternoon. He handed him a cheque for the sum of two hundred pounds. 'And,' he remarked, casually, 'if we m-meet in the future, Elles, p-pray remember we are not acquainted with one another.'

Elles unfolded the cheque and examined it carefully. 'Certainly,' he said, in his level, well-bred voice; 'but you, on your side, remember, that if you are insolent I shall find an explanation with your father extremely amusing.'

Teddy shrugged his shoulders. 'D-don't trouble about that. I've had a satisfactory one on my own account already.'

'Ah! by the advice of a lady, I presume?' said Elles, with a sneer. 'Poor boy! Still in leading strings, eh?'

'Y-yes,' said Teddy serenely, 'and I hope to remain in them. Women, I find, are better judges of a scoundrel than we men.'

MABEL MURRAY HICKSON.

## *At the Sign of the Ship.*

ONE element, at least, of the great American joke, I have discovered. That element is the statement that the present modest writer's name is the name of a syndicate of men of letters, like 'Homer' or 'Alexandre Dumas.' A sound criticism would dispel a conclusion natural, indeed, in a highly critical age. But Bacon's position is just the reverse. America, in the person of Mrs. Gallup, has discovered that Shakspeare, Green (or Greene), Peel (or Peele), Burton, Ben Jonson, Marlowe, and many others, including Spenser, were pseudonyms of Bacon. He wrote many of their works in a double-barrelled way. He not only wrote their plays, poems, and treatises, as we may all read them, but, by aid of two sorts of type in the early editions, he wrote a history of himself and of his times, with an abstract of the Iliad and Odyssey, in cipher, under the obvious books by Shakspeare, Spenser, Burton, or Marlowe.

\* \* \*

Now if Bacon could not only write all his acknowledged works, and do all his known political industries, but also write dozens of things discovered by Mrs. Gallup under a cipher, why, oh critics of America, should I not have *bâclé* my poor productions? I am not a statesman in active business, like Bacon, or a great busy lawyer; I have nothing to do but to scribble for daily bread. To my American sceptics I would say that I am not the collective name of a society of men of letters. I am, really, the author of Mr. Ruskin's later books, of Tennyson's later poems (he paid me very badly), and of the humorous essays and newspaper correspondence of Mr. W. L. Alden. Beneath the text of these I have written, in cipher, the true story of my birth; I am the great-great-grandson of the Cardinal Duke of York, just as Bacon was the son (as Mrs. Gallup makes him say) of Queen Elizabeth and Robert Dudley. Like Bacon, I am 'kept out of

my own,' the crown of these realms; not that I want to wear it, as Bacon did: eminently the reverse. All this, and much more, is hidden in the cipher of my pseudonym, W. L. Alden.

\* \* \*

The myth is so funny, and so dear to American humourists, that it occurs twice in *The New York Times* and *Saturday Review* of August 10. The citizens, apparently, cannot have too much of this excellent *jeu d'esprit*. Well, I am no more a syndicate than an Elizabethan syndicate was Francis Bacon. The country which produced one of these fables may perhaps believe the other. But, if Mrs. Gallup's cipher is right, if Bacon was a bastard of the maiden queen, and thought himself legitimate, what becomes of the other cipher discovered by the late Mr. Donnelly? One thing in Mrs. Gallup's cipher puzzles me vastly—Bacon's abstract of the *Odyssey* which she has discovered under the text of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. Unless Bacon was mad (as I have elsewhere argued) and really did this abstract, where did it come from? It is very good, and Elizabethan in manner. Mrs. Gallup's English publishers (Messrs. Gay and Bird) state that two English scholars were asked to inspect the lady as she worked out her cipher on the original editions, and declined. Surely they erred. One ought to try everything. Darwin, if he had been an Elizabethan scholar, would not have grudged an hour or so, and no more expenditure of time was needed. The man who had a bassoon (or was it a trombone?) played to a plant, to see how the plant would take it, shrank from no experiment. Not that I am treating Mrs. Gallup's discovery as a 'plant,' though, so far, I am not convinced that Bacon proclaimed himself Francis I., King of England, or that Queen Elizabeth had two fine boys, unacknowledged. 'I am a barren stock,' she said, in grief, when Queen Mary had a baby, and surely Queen Elizabeth must have known!

\* \* \*

Is the following sentence grammatical? I cull it from an article by M. E. W. Sherwood (Mrs. Sherwood, I think) in the American *Saturday Review*. 'I think I would rather die of hiccoughs superinduced by reading Anstey than to read George Moore's *Sister Teresa*.' Again, 'I would rather read it' (some other book) 'than to attempt' something else. Is the italicised 'to' necessary? Is it grammar? If it is, ought we not to write,

'I would rather to die of hiccoughs than to read *Sister Teresa*?' It would be correct, I think, to say, 'I would prefer to die, rather than to read *Sister Teresa*,' or 'I would rather die than read *Sister Teresa*.' But Mrs. Sherwood's grammar may be a revival of an old idiom, or a virile effort to establish a new and more scholarly idiom. I am no grammarian, but I would rather read *Sister Teresa* than declare in favour of Mrs. Sherwood's idiom, which, after all, may be the invention of the compositor, that common scape-goat.

\* \* \*

From Mrs. Sherwood I learn that Mrs. Cronwright (*née* Schreiner) is 'The Cassandra of the Cape,' that her lord, Mr. Cronwright, is 'a pure John Bull,' and that Mrs. Cronwright 'has given the bull-dog a bad bite in the throat, she being "the Murr Kat."' This, if true, indicates domestic infelicity, 'a cat and dog life,' and one is sorry for the circumstance. Politics are inconvenient in the family circle. If Mrs. Cronwright believes that the Boers are conspicuous for their kind and philanthropic treatment of the native races, while the English do nothing but flog them to death, and if the observations of Mr. Cronwright lead him to diametrically opposite conclusions, while both think of very little else, peace cannot spread her wings above their hearth. Everybody knows that, in differences of opinion like this, mere facts and evidence count for nothing at all. People believe what they want to believe; even pro-Boers are not superior to this weakness. The most pleasant and friendly way of dealing with persons who believe every statement against their country is to agree with them, to 'see them and go one better.' How Lord Roberts impaled an honest fellow of a rebel, and flayed the wife of a field cornet alive, and surrounded her with wasps' nests, is a good anecdote to tell, and it is agreeable to detect the exact point at which the anti-Englander begins to doubt your assertions. You may go to a considerable distance in fiction before he parts company with you.

\* \* \*

I wonder if authors do wisely in publishing their novels at sixpence. For one, I feel disinclined to purchase a novel at six shillings if I can get one as good, though not as new, for sixpence. If one has not read it before, it is as good as new. Thus novelists are handicapping themselves, I think, by their sixpenny ventures. The new wares will not move off if the old wares can be had so



cheaply. A man reads, at a 'tizzy,' what he had not read when priced at twelve times the humble tanner.

\* \* \*

Thus I have inexpensively perused, and thrown away, Mr. Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. One always heard that it was 'horrid' enough to suit the taste of Miss Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey*. Yet it only wins a smile from the experienced student of vampires and their ways. The rules of vampiring, as indicated by Mr. Stoker, are too numerous and too elaborate. One does not see why the leading vampire, Count Dracula, could not bolt out of the box where he was finally run to earth by a solicitor named Jonathan. If he could fly about as a bat, why did he crawl down steep walls head foremost? The rules of the game of Vampire ought to be printed in an appendix; at present the pastime is as difficult as Bridge. Perhaps I do not understand the rules.

1. Every vampire, all day, must lie in consecrated ground. He can be stumped when *in* his ground, not when out of it.
2. All day a vampire is off-side.
3. No vampire may enter a house uninvited.
4. No vampire may cross salt water except at ebb tide and full tide.
5. Every person bitten by a vampire becomes a vampire. (This rule strikes at the root of morality.)
6. No vampire can vamp a person protected by garlic. (The peasantry of Southern Europe always smell of garlic, perhaps as security against vampires.)
7. A vampire, staked through the heart with a sharp piece of wood, is out.
8. Every man should stake his own young woman if she is a vampire.

These appear to be the chief rules: there are others to which a person of taste would rather not allude.

\* \* \*

On the whole, *Dracula* is very much too 'bluggy,' and that not as the result of honest clash of steel. The girl who became a vampire after receiving three proposals in one day must have been a minx. She went about vamping children at Hampstead. A vampire with a cheque-book, a solicitor, and a balance at the bank, is not a plausible kind of creature. Mr. Sheridan Le

Fanu's Carmilla was a better and more credible vampire, and her story was less butcherly than this sixpenny narrative. To me the vampire belief seems one of the very few popular superstitions which have not a basis in fact of some kind; unless, indeed, the basis is the nature of infectious diseases.

\* \* \*

How 'strong' novels are at present! I cull a few cases of strength, not naming the romancer.

- A. 'Refreshingly strong.'
- B. 'The strongest novel the season has produced.'
- C. 'Exceptionally strong and brilliant.'
- D. 'Strong, clever, and striking.'

Here are four out of nine which the press calls 'strong,' a fifth is 'great' and 'daring,' a sixth is 'powerful'; the others are only 'exquisite' and 'excellent,' 'remarkable,' and 'really fine.' In what an abundance of genius are we rejoicing, and how fortunate is the publisher who drives a team of nine strong, powerful, exquisite, and daring authors. Go to, all this is bosh! we really are not from strength to strength advancing, as the kind critics would induce the guileless to believe.

\* \* \*

The sixpenny books enable the critic to come up with the novels which he did not read in their six-shilling bloom. Thus I did not read *Isabel Carnaby*: perhaps because the persons who recommended it did not possess my literary confidence. But now I understand its popularity. *Isabel Carnaby* 'makes the best of both worlds,' and represents smart Nonconformist society. The reader is introduced to preachers and politicians. The ghost of John Wesley, also of his lively, luckless sister Hetty, haunts the work. The people say smart things, and if some miss fire, and some look as if they had been selected from a note-book, others are vivacious. I recognise a 'goak' which I had myself excogitated, in early youth, but I never found a chance of leading up to it. Both 'serious' and polite circles are conciliated. 'It seems to me,' said Isabel, 'that love is the leaven that leavens the whole lump.' Love is a strange thing. Yesterday I saw a little dog welcome his mistress home. He is a kind and comic little dog, full of friendliness to everybody. But when the lady that owns him arrived, he went quite wild with glee, and whined pitifully if she was for a moment out of his sight. Now, speaking

as an evolutionist, I suppose that love is developed out of the maternal, paternal, and sexual instincts, or that evolutionists say so. But none of these instincts is the basis of a dog's affection for his master or mistress. A male dog does not care for his puppies. There is no affection between the dog father and the dog mother of a litter as there is, for example, between mated wild ducks. What is the root of the dog's amazing and beautiful affection for his master? It is not only gratitude, for all the world is equally kind to the little dog who is the only begetter of this sermon. And, if we think and hope that love, in ourselves, is more strong than death, and imperishable, what about the dog's affection? Shall he not be admitted 'to that equal sky'? If so, I hope he won't bark at night.

\* \* \*

I always thought it would come to this: to what follows, from the *Toper-na-Vuolich Courier*. 'The usually, we might even say unusually, quiet town of Toper-na-Vuolich (from the hotel window of which, alone, a really adequate view of Ben Whateffer may be obtained, when it does not rain), was yesterday thrown into a state of unwonted excitement. Since the deplorable and mysterious event which we are about to narrate, the entire population, to quote the oldest inhabitant, Mr. Neil Macmaster, "was took drams" while discussing the mysterious occurrence. For some days our hotel (the Lochgarry Arms, Mr. Schneider) has been the residence of a quiet and retired individual, who had made no acquaintances among the fashionables who throng the hostelry. Yesterday he was observed upon the pier, anxiously inquiring at what hour *The Privateer* (that respected old steamship which celebrated her jubilee in 1884) was likely to arrive. The courteous and obliging functionaries replied that she had kept time the day before, whence it might be inferred that she would arrive about 4.35 (as coloured on the card), or would be unusually late, according to the taste and temperament of the framer of the hypothesis. As six o'clock approached, it became the opinion of many that *The Privateer* "had died on the way," which she does every now and then, owing to the antiquity of her boilers and other apparatus. However, at 7.15 the thick black cloud of smoke which invariably heralds the approach of *The Privateer* was seen in the offing. The train to Onich, which is timed to meet her, then got up steam, and as *The Privateer* entered the harbour, moved away with comparative rapidity,

amidst the tears and execrations of the passengers, who arrived on the platform just as the train left the station. The local characters who had assembled to witness this time-honoured practical witticism were enjoying especially the excitement of one passenger, a young gentleman with a long moustache and a photographic camera, when a voice was heard to hiss, "*Enfin je te tiens*," and the quiet resident at the Lochgarry Arms, rushing forward, buried a knife in the shoulder of the young passenger. The assassin then gave himself up to justice and police-constable Macraw, who was in the refreshment-room. The author of the rash deed was instantly precognosced by Procurator-Fiscal Mactavish, and emitted the following declaration. He is, he says, Mr. Stubbins, a popular novelist. For years, he declares, he has suffered from the gentleman who illustrates his novels, and who, he says, makes him ridiculous. Producing a volume from his pocket, he excitedly asked Mr. Mactavish "to look at this," pointing to the pictures. "These," he cried, "were done by the caitiff who now welters in his gore. Law affords no remedy, and I, knowing that the wretch was to pass this way, have executed the wild justice of revenge!" Mr. Stubbins is in custody, and inquiries are being made into his mental health, as his action does not appear to be that of a responsible person. We rejoice to add that the victim of the dastardly attempt is very little the worse, the lethal weapon having scarcely penetrated the folds of the plaid, ulster, and great coat which he wore on account of the climate, and which protected him from the weapon of the assassin. The wretched man has some sympathisers among those who have examined the pictures in his novels. Many think that the eccentricities of the railway and steamboat service have shaken his mental equilibrium, as he has often been seen wringing his hands on the pier when a steamer did not arrive, or a train went away at hours not appointed in the time-tables, nor capable of being calculated, with any confidence, by the courteous and obliging functionaries.

\* \* \*

These things may be a parable, but, after enduring much from the irresponsible vagaries of Scotch locomotives, and after turning over the pages of a number of illustrated novels, no rash act on the part of an author would surprise me. A novel by Mr. W. E. Norris, especially, lies before me, and if that author in some wild hour did clear scores with the artist, I could not conscientiously condemn him. Not being intimately familiar

with the law of libel (which may be severe on art criticism), I unwillingly abstain from being more particular.

\* \*

There has been a discussion as to whether the golden branch which, in the sixth book of the *Æneid*, serves as the hero's passport to Hades, was a mistletoe bough. This is a truly antiquarian topic, for we can never find out the answer. The ancients of the Augustan age did not write commentaries on the works of living authors. There was no Virgil Society at Rome, and no Dr. Furnivall of the period to ask Virgil what he meant by the branch of gold, and there were no eager Virgilians who insisted on knowing the poet's meaning better than the poet. In our day Dr. Furnivall asked Mr. Browning what was the meaning of his poem of *Childe Roland*. The poet said that it was just a poem, an imaginative picture of Childe Roland coming to 'the dark tower,' as in the quotation from King Lear. The dark tower, I presume, was the seat of the Giant who said 'fee fo fum,' as in our *Jack the Giant Killer*. But many of Mr. Browning's admirers insist that the poem is an allegory, which they expound at great length. Well, Mr. Browning denied the charge, and I am apt to think that he knew best.

\* \*

But this is a digression. Nobody asked Virgil whether his golden bough was mistletoe or not; at all events, there lives no record of reply. Hundreds of years after Virgil's death the learned had their own opinions, though they did not mention mistletoe. Now one correspondent, who gives 'Italy' as his address, says that he has hunted for mistletoe in the woods near the lake of Nemi, where Roman antiquaries thought that the bough grew. The woods are mainly of ilex. He has never found mistletoe. When he asks the local peasants for local mistletoe they direct him—to the gunmaker's! The reason is that the gunmaker sells birdlime. Of course it does not follow that there is now no mistletoe near Nemi; or, even if there is not, that there was none there in Virgil's time. At present the plant, like the mylodon in Patagonia, cannot be found, that is all.

\* \*

I keep troubling the learned, my anthropological friends, with examples of a fairly high religion among low savages, who do not appear to have borrowed it. This faith, if proved, strikes at the root of some prevalent theories, or is thought so to do. But it is really a case for the review of evidence in a critical way, and I

wish that some young student, in the possession of leisure, would undertake this review. The range of reading required is very wide, and we want the earliest reports of explorers, and a study of their qualifications, their bias, and so forth. Mr. Max Müller, on this point as to savage religion, was of my own provisional opinion, and, in his *Last Essays*, cites an example which is new to me. 'Wandering tribes in Patagonia' have a rhythmic form of prayer, cited in M. A. Guimard's *Three Years' Slavery among the Patagonians* (p. 163). The prayer runs thus :

O Father, Great Man !  
 King of this land !  
 Favour us, dear Friend, every day  
 With good food,  
 With good water,  
 With good sleep !  
 Poor am I ; poor is this meal :  
 Take of it, if Thou wilt.

This is a touching petition. The theory that early religion rests on *do ut des*, the presentation of gifts in hope of a return, is but feebly indicated ; the gift is humble. Still, it is more usual, I think, among lower savages, neither to give sacrifice nor prayer. I do not know how far the nomadic Patagonians have come in touch with missionaries, but missionaries would not have inculcated the little gift or sacrifice. The example, of course, does not, so far, prove anything, but merely points, with many others, to a region of statements which has been overlooked and needs close examination. We cannot merely dismiss all such statements as unlikely, for the improbability rests on our own ignorance and preconceptions. Somebody with wealth and an interest in the subject might do worse than found a prize essay, for, verily, 'there is no money in it.'

ANDREW LANG.

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# INDEX

## TO THE THIRTY-EIGHTH VOLUME.

ABEL'S SUSANNA, by Edith C. M. Dart, 148

According to the Code, by Elizabeth L. Banks, 455

Airs and Graces, by Mabel Murray Hickson, Author of 'Concerning Teddy,' 559

Amateur Poacher, The, by Horace G. Hutchinson, 281

Autumn by the Sea, by Fred Whishaw, 859

BAILEY (H. C.), Dolly and Dick, 528

— My Lady of Orange, 1

Banks (Elizabeth L.), According to the Code, 455

Beeching (Rev. C. H.), Some Notes on an Examination, 350

Birds' Bath, The, by Walter Herries Pollock, 484

Birds' Good-bye, The, by Walter Herries Pollock, 58

Booth (Eva Gore-), A Monk's Lament for Maeve, 558

Bruce-Angier (Charles), Cardland; or, the Card-playing Age, 54

Butcher (Mrs.), English Flowers in an Egyptian Garden, 465

CARDLAND; OR, THE CARD-PLAYING AGE, by Charles Bruce-Angier, 54

Curate of St. Hugh's, The, by May Kendall, 81

DART (EDITH C. M.), Abel's Susanna, 148

— Enoch—a Born Naturalist, 384

— Passon's Dilemma, 485

Disappearance of Plants, The, by the Rev. J. Vaughan, M.A., 218

VOL. XXXVIII. NO. CCXXVIII.

Dolly and Dick, by H. C. Bailey, 528

Dyson (Edward), The Gold-Stealers: a Story of Waddy, 253, 289, 385, 481

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON THROUGH FRENCH EYE-GLASSES, by George Paston, 419

English Flowers in an Egyptian Garden, by Mrs. Butcher, 465

Enoch—a Born Naturalist, by Edith C. M. Dart, 384

Essex and the Early Botanists, by the Rev. John Vaughan, M.A., 445

FRANCIS (M. E.) (Mrs. Francis Blundell), Fyander's Widow, 64, 97, 193

Fyander's Widow, by M. E. Francis (Mrs. Francis Blundell), 64, 97, 193

GILBERT WHITE, by the Rev. John Vaughan, M.A., 543

Gold-Stealers, The: a Story of Waddy, by Edward Dyson, 253, 289, 385, 481

Grayson (George), 'The Points of a Bank,' 246

Gregory (R. R. C.), The Mission of Mr. Rider Haggard, and Rural Education, 155

HARKER (MRS. L. ALLEN), Sanctuary, 241

— Some Eighteenth-Century Children's Books, 548

Hickson (Mabel Murray), (Author of 'Concerning Teddy'), Airs and Graces, 559



- Hudson (W. H.), *A Summer's End on the Itchen*, 17
- Hutchinson (Horace G.), *The Amateur Poacher*, 231
- IN COLONIAL EDITIONS, by Mary Colborne-Veel, 333
- In the Woods at Sunrise, by Fred Whishaw, 168
- KENDALL (MAY), *The Curate of St. Hugh's*, 31
- LANG (ANDREW), *At the Sign of the Ship*, 85, 188, 279, 373, 471, 568
- MISSION OF MR. RIDER HAGGARD, THE, AND RURAL EDUCATION, by R. R. C. Gregory, 155
- Monk's Lament for Maeve, A., by Eva Gore-Booth, 558
- My Lady of Orange, by H. C. Bailey, 1
- My Only Ghost, by Walter Herries Pollock, 226
- PAGET (LIEUT.-COL. A. L.), *Some Experiences of a Commandant Prisoners of War, at Deadwood Camp, St. Helena, 1900-1901*, 513
- Passon's Dilemma, by Edith C. M. Dart, 435
- Paston (George), *Eighteenth-century London through French Eye-glasses*, 419
- 'Points of a Bank, The,' by George Grayson, 246
- Pollock (Walter Herries), *My Only Ghost*, 226
- *The Birds' Bath*, 434
- *The Birds' Good-bye*, 53
- RECOLLECTIONS OF A TENDERFOOT, I., by J. R. E. Sumner, 317
- Robertson (D. J.), *A Stone Eagle*, 138
- SANCTUARY, by Mrs. L. Allen Harker, 241
- Sign of the Ship*, At the, by Andrew Lang, 85, 188, 279, 373, 471, 568
- Some Eighteenth-century Children's Books*, by Mrs. L. Allen Harker, 548
- Some Experiences of a Commandant Prisoners of War, at Deadwood Camp, St. Helena, 1900-1901*, by Lieut.-Col. A. L. Paget, 513
- Some Notes on an Examination*, by the Rev. C. H. Beeching, 350
- Stone Eagle, A*, by D. J. Robertson, 138
- Summer's End on the Itchen, A*, by W. H. Hudson, 17
- Sumner (J. R. E.), *Recollections of a Tenderfoot, I.*, 317
- TALLENTYRE (S. G.), *The Women of the Salons*:  
VII. *Madame Récamier*, 127
- That! A Story of South Devon*, by Mrs. Bernard Whishaw, 36
- VAUGHAN (THE REV. JOHN, M.A.), *Essex and the Early Botanists*, 445
- *Gilbert White*, 548
- *The Disappearance of Plants*, 218
- Veel (Mary Colborne-), *In Colonial Editions*, 333
- WHISHAW (FRED), *Autumn by the Sea*, 359
- *In the Woods at Sunrise*, 168
- Whishaw (Mrs. Bernard), *That! A Story of South Devon*, 36
- Women of the Salons, The*, by S. G. Tallentyre:  
VII. *Madame Récamier*, 127





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